Minutes August 12, 2019

The Committee of the Whole meeting of the Board of School Directors convened at 4:19 p.m. in the Community Board Room of the Jr./Sr. High School with Mrs. Ziolkowski, Board Vice President, presiding.

CALL TO ORDER Mrs. Ziolkowski if anyone would be recording the meeting. No one indicated their intent to record.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Larkin (arr. 4:26pm), Mr. McCaffrey, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Redner (arr. 4:56pm), Mrs. Taylor (arr. 4:37pm), Mrs. Waxler, and Mrs. Ziolkowski.

Board Members Absent: Mrs. McAvoy and Mr. Zeppos

Administrative Staff Present: Mr. Scoboria, Dr. Woodard, Mr. Boyer, Mr. Amst, Mr. Cafoncelli and Mr. Redcay.

Attendees: Dan Strock, Community Member; Todd Vukmanic, Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates Architects; and Shelley Filer, recording secretary. An audience sign-in sheet is included as part of these official minutes.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS • School Board Business Meeting – August 26, 2019, 6:00 p.m. • Committee of the Whole Meeting – September 9, 2019, 4:15 p.m.

All listed meetings are held in the Community Board Room of the Jr./Sr. High School unless otherwise noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT None.

ROUTINE APPROVALS

MEETING MINUTES Upon a motion by Mr. McCaffrey, second by Mrs. Phillips, the Board approved the following minutes:

• June 10, 2019 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Absent: McAvoy and Zeppos (Larkin, Redner, and Taylor arrived after the vote)
Nays: None. Motion carried.

COMMITTEES

A. CURRICULUM/ TECHNOLOGY 1. After-school Coding Club Opportunity – Dan Strock proposed a tuition-based after-school coding opportunity for students in
grades 3-6. His business would rent classroom space in the District for two seven-week sessions (one day/week), using their own equipment. The instructor is JSHS teacher Curt Minich. Online classes are also available. Scholarship opportunities would be possible for students who qualify. This opportunity would be provided by an outside organization, paid for by parents, is not district affiliated, yet falls within the same parameters as other after-school activities already operating. Draft fliers would be submitted for approval.

2. STEAM Fund Proposal – Dan Strock wants to establish a STEAM fund through Berks County Community Foundation to support STEAM opportunities in the District. Requests for funds would be approved by the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Strock and the Board. Mr. Strock likened the fund to an athletic booster fund. He envisions providing support for after-school STEAM programs rather than curricular needs. Mr. McCaffrey mentioned a contact in the county who could provide information on a possible donor. Mrs. Waxler asked about partnering with WAEF to avoid competition with donor lists. While willing to discuss that possibility, Mr. Strock favored a streamlined approval process with a laser focus on STEAM without the varied input from an organization’s board of directors regarding the use of funds as for other grants. While not a unanimous decision, approval of the fund will be on the August 26, agenda for approval pending the outcome of a discussion with WAEF.

3. Technology Initiatives Update – Mr. Arnst reported on the progress this summer of the technology initiatives guided by technology audit assessment. Most of the new projectors are installed at WHEC, HDMI cabling is installed as well as secondary ports. Approximately 575 iPads have been prepped and are ready for deployment. At WREC, 350 iPads have been prepped. At the JSHS, the iMacs from Mr. Siggins’ room have been moved to the computer library area. New iMacs have been set up in his room in the STEAM wing. New STEAM devices have been installed. New iPad cases for the JSHS are ready for deployment. The department is offering 1300 slots for iPad deployment including some on Saturdays creating additional flexibility for students/parents. The auditorium projector has been replaced at the JSHS. Most of the new projectors at the JSHS have also been replaced with HDMI cabling and secondary ports. Every classroom at the JSHS has received a new phone. Teacher laptops district-wide have been updated with the necessary security upgrades. The student information system was rolled over. Following a soft
launched the District’s Instagram account there are already 124 followers. A quality of service evaluation was done on the network addressing some problems with wireless service.

4. Field Trip Approval – A request for an overnight basketball tournament at Shikellamy HS in December will be on the August 26, agenda for approval.

5. Elementary School Counseling Special – With the addition of a half-time counselor at WHEC, a monthly special will be provided for K-3. Grade 4 will have the special as part of their weekly cyclical rotation. The fourth grade will be using PATHS curriculum which focuses on social and emotional competencies and is a universal prevention model. As WREC uses this curriculum as well, it will provide for a nice transition. Career readiness lessons will also be included to complete the fifth grade requirement.

Mr. McCaffrey asked if the District was considering applying for the Flexible Instruction Days announced by PDE. Mr. Scoboria said at the last BCIU Superintendents’ meeting only 4-5 county districts expressed interest in doing so. WASD will hold off this year to see how those districts figure out the logistics. The superintendents were also cautioned by a prominent attorney who specializes in special education law to beware of problems in delivering special education and health services on those days as well problems with labor contracts the days would cause.

B. FACILITIES

1. Feasibility Study Update – Todd Vukmanic, Senior Project Manager for Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates presented an update on the feasibility study and a timeline of next steps. Over the summer, using the focus items of regional population trends, district population trends, district enrollment, facility evaluations and programming evaluations, Crabtree, Rohrbaugh began assessing the District. Two major documents, a Facility Condition Index (FCI) and an Education Suitability Assessment (ESA) are expected to be finalized by the end of August. In September they will meet with administration to review the documents and develop options. The final study is expected to be presented to the Board in November.

2. School Police Officer – Mr. Redcay reviewed the District’s unsuccessful attempts to obtain a School Resource Officer (SRO) through the Wyomissing Borough PD and the Berks County Sheriff’s Office. The District is now pursuing a School Police Officer (SPO). While both officers have law
enforcement backgrounds, an SRO would be employed by a law enforcement agency and assigned to the District. An SPO will be a private officer employed by the District. State Police approval is required to deem WASD as a police force with one member. The MOU with the local police departments would be amended. The job description for an SRO and SPO are virtually the same. Basic duties include ensuring the safety and security of stakeholders by reacting to incidents; communicating as the liaison between local law enforcement agencies; providing training through professional development; and strengthening drills and procedures. The SPO will be visible in all three buildings, building relationships with staff and students. The officer will be armed, most likely will be governed by the Act 93 agreement, and will be supervised by Mike Cafoncelli. The Act 44 grant provides salary and benefits for two years; the funds must be used by June 30, 2021. Administration hopes to identify a qualified candidate to submit to the State Police for approval of the WASD police force and have the officer begin his duties in January. As the grant money is specific to salary and benefits, additional incidental expenses to be purchased using the general fund include equipment and uniform, IT equipment for the office, added insurance premium, mileage between buildings, etc. At the conclusion of the grant window, the position will be re-evaluated. Mr. Scoboria clarified that the SPO would have arrest powers to handle low level offenses such as tobacco and truancy violations; however, more serious violations would be handled through the MOU as the District would have no means to transport or detain an offender or secure evidence. Although some Board members expressed concern with the SPO being armed, Mr. Cafoncelli said it is a requirement for SPO status.

The Board recessed at 6:05 p.m. to conduct the School Board Business Meeting, and reconvened at 6:15 p.m.

Continuing with the discussion on the SPO, Mrs. Taylor asked if Threat Assessment Teams would be formed following a discussion she heard at the last BCIU meeting. Mr. Redcay said some district personnel had recently attended a BCIU training on threat assessment. They received materials and are working toward establishing teams.

3. Flannery Field Renovation Update – Mr. Cafoncelli said the track surface is being installed this week and will be usable August 23. The bleachers were delayed in manufacturing so the company will provide temporary bleachers until their
arrival. The storage building will be installed in September and minor asphalt repairs are still needed. Overgrown trees around the Flannery memorial area were removed. Mr. Scoboria indicated when the area is replanted, a rededication will likely be planned.

4. Outdoor Classroom Update – Mr. Cafoncelli shared the two bids received. Both were significantly higher than the engineer’s estimated construction costs. Although he felt the timing of the bidding process may have been a factor, the costs shouldn’t have been impacted that much. Mrs. Waxler suggested requesting the engineer repeat the bidding process at a more favorable time since there was such a disparity. Mr. Scoboria felt the engineer should review the bids against the plans and explain the differences.

5. Auditorium Risers JSHS Update – Mr. Cafoncelli said new risers have been purchased from Kurtz Bros. and should arrive before the start of school.

6. Field House CO Detection – The fire marshal annually inspects our facilities for compliance with fire code. Due to the storage of motorized vehicles in the basement of the field house, the District is required to upgrade the alarm system with carbon monoxide detectors in the upstairs. The cost is approximately $21,800 to upgrade the system through Berkshire Systems. This project has been added to the capital project plan. Mr. Scoboria suggested reviewing the capital project plan in the Fall again to see where this project will fit in the list of priorities.

C. FINANCE

1. Act 1 Timeline for 2020-21 Budget – Mr. Boyer said the Act 1 Index will be released on September 30, to kick off the budget season. In November and December the Board will consider adopting a resolution to propose and advertise the preliminary budget unless it decides to opt out raising taxes above the Act 1 Index. January 9 is the deadline to have the preliminary budget available for public review. January 29 is the deadline to adopt a preliminary budget. May 31 is the deadline for the proposed final budget, with final adoption no later than June 30.

2. Cash Flow – Revenue for July was higher than expected due to the early arrival of the money from the Reading Hospital. The 2020-21 payment will be the last one under the current agreement. Expenditures were also slightly higher due to still paying some expenses from the 18-19 school year.
3. PlanCon Form J – Mr. Boyer received an email indicating that the District failed to complete Form J detailing final project expenditures for projects completed in 2003 and 2010. The form for the 2003 project will be on the August 26, agenda for approval. The 2010 project will require some research to complete the form and will appear on a later agenda. No funding was lost for failure to complete these forms.

4. WAEF Grants – Two grants will be on the August 26, agenda.

5. Contracts – Several routine contracts will be on the August 26, agenda for approval.

6. Bus Driver List for 2019-20 – The driver list and substitutes will be on the August 26, agenda for approval.

7. Bus Stops for 2019-20 – A few bus stops have been changed for increased efficiency. Request for approval of the listing will be on the August 26, agenda for approval.

8. IRS 403(b) Volume Submitter Plan Document Adoption – Approval to revise the form is required as a result of the provision in the Act 93 agreement to provide matching funds.

D. PERSONNEL

1. Hiring Update – Mr. Scoboria reported most of the open position have been filled for the start of the year. A few remain in the Special Education department. Dr. Woodard is conducting new teacher induction August 13-14.

2. Crossing Guards – Mr. Scoboria reported he is still working with West Reading to get the resolution and ordinance in place. He said he will be attending a future borough budget meeting and encouraged Board members to attend as well to press the issue on sharing the costs as was done in the past.

3. Substitute Pay Rates – Mrs. Waxler said a few Board members received a letter from a substitute teacher regarding the substitute pay differential between districts. Mr. Scoboria is gathering information from other Berks County districts to discuss at the next Finance meeting. He said the District’s substitute fill rates have been pretty high.
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ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. McCaffrey seconded by Mrs. Waxler to adjourn at 6:56 p.m.

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Board Secretary