

**SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
800 SOUTHERN DRIVE
CATAWISSA, PA 17820**

The March 13, 2006 Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:36 p.m. with President Karl Meyer in charge of the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

President Meyer welcomed everyone, followed by a roll call of Board Members.

BOARD MEMBERS

Amanda Bell-Perry
Elsie Bittner
Hugh Jones (*Absent*)

Karl Meyer
Charles Porter
Ronald Savitski

Paul Starr
Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Alan J. Lonoconus, Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; Roy Clippinger, Pat Shultz, James Becker, Paul Caputo, James Dunkelberger and Barbara Lombardo, Administrators; district residents and members of the media.

AGENDA HEARING PERIOD

President Meyer announced that all Personnel Items on the agenda would be considered action items.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lonoconus' report included the following topics:

1.) Mr. Becker and Dr. Lonoconus attended the Pennsylvania Department of Education Inspired Leadership Initiative on Thursday and Friday of the past week. The goal behind the initiative is to get all administrators statewide trained in the new process for strategic planning. The strategic plan process will now tie in with the budget process. He noted that Southern was in Tier 3 and would have the benefit of watching other districts go through the process first. Mr. Becker reported that there were two groups involved in the training. One group was the more experienced administrators and the other was made up of newer, less experienced administrators. Both Dr. Lonoconus and Mr. Becker agreed that Southern Columbia is already doing some of the things that were recommended. The district seems to already be ahead in the process.

Mr. Porter asked when the district would need to update the Strategic Plan, since Southern is in Tier 3. Dr. Lonoconus replied that it would need to be done about three years from now, however the process will probably start in two years. Mr. Porter asked when the mid point review is due. Dr. Lonoconus replied that they had to request an extension since the Professional Education Plan was approved late. Mr. Porter asked if they would have to reunite the Strategic Plan Committee. Dr. Lonoconus replied that the state wants districts to try to get as many of the original committee members as possible. He noted that a lot of things have changed. English as a Second Language was not even a part of the district's Strategic Plan. He noted that he and Mr. Becker would keep the Board informed regarding the initiative.

2.) He referred to a letter regarding the Accountability Block Grant. He noted that the funds have been very beneficial statewide.

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3.) Interviews for the Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School were held during the past week. Two finalists will be meet with the Joint Operating Committee in executive session on March 21st for final interviews.

4.) He reported that the damage to the pipes near the lower pump house was not caused by freezing. The pressure from the new pump blew out the back of the pipe. He and Mr. Campbell discussed installing a variable speed pump to decrease the initial pressure when the pump turns on. Mr. Slusser noted that he would like to speak to Mr. Campbell regarding the setup of the plumbing and the need for a switch before anything is done. Dr. Lonoconus noted that Mr. Campbell was originally going to enclose the area, but when they discovered the well had sulfur, they were not sure what they were going to do. A filtration system was discussed. Mr. Campbell didn't want to do one thing and then find out that they would be moving in a totally different direction.

5.) Mr. Campbell's last day of employment is March 31st. Dr. Lonoconus would like to have as many Board members as possible involved in the interview process for his replacement. He asked Board members to contact him or the Board Secretary as soon as possible if they were interested in participating.

6.) He requested an executive session following the meeting to consult with counsel regarding a pending litigation matter.

Mr. Yeager asked if the Accountability Block Grant was included in the Governor's budget proposal. Dr. Lonoconus replied affirmatively and added that he would include information regarding the Governor's proposal in the next Friday Letter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Activities - Paul Starr, Chairperson, reported that the committee met prior to the Board meeting and the main topic of discussion was if they would be rehiring Mr. Sharrow as Athletic Director for another year. Mr. Sharrow is willing to do the job for one more year. It is the committee's recommendation to continue his contract. Solicitor Roberts noted that if the Board decides to continue Mr. Sharrow's contract, they would not need to take any formal action. The contract would automatically continue. If they choose not to continue, a motion to notify Mr. Sharrow of their intent would need to be approved prior to April 1, 2006.

Facilities & Services - Mike Yeager, Chairperson, reported that the committee met last Monday night. They listened to presentations by PPL and Chevron representatives regarding their proposals for the Guaranteed Energy Savings Project. The committee needs to meet again to make a decision once all of the information requested of the companies has been received. Mr. Rodgers reported that he did receive all of the information from PPL prior to the meeting. Solicitor Roberts recommended that the Board set a new date for action at the March 20th Board meeting, send letters to both companies to confirm that their proposals will hold beyond the original date. Mr. Porter asked if it would be possible to get PPL's and Chevron's information to the Board in the next Friday Letter. Dr. Lonoconus replied affirmatively, if Chevron's information is received in time.

Mr. Yeager reported that no bids were received for the Baseball Field and Roadway projects. Mr. Rodgers reported that at the direction of the Board, the two projects would be broken out into two completely separate projects. They would be advertised separately and separate bids would be received. Mr. Porter noted that there might have been some stipulation that kept contractors from bidding when the two projects were advertised together. Mr. Yeager reported that the road is in extremely rough shape.

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One company submitted bids for the High School Gymnasium Bleacher and Basketball Backstop project. The base bid included removal of the door. The alternate bid left the door intact, but a significant number of seats would be lost. Following the last committee meeting, Mr. Rodgers requested a list of references from Degler-Whiting. He followed up on the four references. They were favorable with the exception of the Mount Carmel School District. They had a problem with the manual handrail. Mr. Rodgers did not feel that would be a factor since the district had requested electronic rails. Mr. Yeager added that the door in the middle of the gym is basically useless. It is the recommendation of the committee to go with the base bid. The project was estimated at \$92,000 and the bid came in at \$76,900. Another recommendation is to replace the backboards, not just the cranks. There was some concern over hairline cracks and the inability to replace them if one would break due to their size. Randall is getting quotes. Mr. Yeager thought they would cost approximately \$2,000 a piece. Mr. Porter asked if they would be getting standardized backboards in case one would break. Dr. Lonoconus replied affirmatively. Mr. Yeager noted that safety straps were also recommended to relieve some of the impact when the backboards are cranked into place.

A filtration system for the sulfur well was discussed. The fence rail that was discussed at a February Board meeting came up as a discussion topic at the Activities Committee meeting. If they are going to install the safety rail, it should probably be done quickly. Mr. Yeager noted that the fence is dangerous. Mr. Caputo noted that he had planned for students to install the rail as part of a service project. The quote received for the baseball outfield fence was \$1,500 and \$1,800 for the entire softball field fence. Present Meyer asked if the fence actually is dangerous. Mr. Sharrow replied that with the size of the students and their ability, it could be dangerous. Most schools have something in place for safety precautions. Mr. Yeager noted that if most schools have it and Southern doesn't it could be a factor. Solicitor Roberts noted that if there would be a situation and the fence is inconsistent with industry standards, it would be a factor. It was recommended that quotes be obtained and a motion included on the next agenda. Mr. Yeager noted that the lip on the infield is consistent throughout the entire base line. Mr. Porter asked if there would be three quotes for the safety rail and noted that it would be prudent to obtain more than one quote.

Dr. Lonoconus noted that the e-mail server has been ordered, but the system would have to be taken down for at least two days, so the installation may have to be delayed.

Finance - Karl Mayer, Chairperson, reported that they discussed the CMAVTS budget and the budget calendar. The proposed budget has been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The budget was divided into hard and soft costs. They are still waiting for information from the State. They are waiting for a lot of figures to come in on both revenues and costs. Mr. Rodgers noted that he is anxiously awaiting the state budget and continues to look at ways to cut the soft costs. Dr. Lonoconus reported that they would have a clearer idea of the budget status in May. He reminded the Board that the staffing report was delayed until April due to Kindergarten registration at the end of March. Mr. Porter asked if the high school numbers would be available for the Finance Committee meeting in April. Dr. Lonoconus replied that if not for the Finance Committee, they would definitely be available for the first Board meeting in April. Mr. Caputo noted that they would not know exact class sizes until late summer.

After a brief discussion regarding district transportation, President Meyer explained that the possibility of contracting out student transportation was brought up as a discussion item at the committee meeting. He noted that it has been looked at in the past.

CSIU - Mrs. Bittner reported that she would be unable to attend the CSIU meetings and that someone else would have to take her place on the CSIU Board. The CSIU Board meets on the

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second Wednesday of each month. Board members were instructed to give the position some thought before the next Board meeting.

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

ITEMS – FISCAL

Mr. Porter asked from which account the transfers were being made. Mr. Rodgers responded that the first transfer was from the budgetary reserve account to technology equipment and software accounts.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Bittner, to award the bid for High School Gymnasium Bleacher Replacement and Basketball Backstop Renovations to Degler-Whiting, Inc. (Frazer, PA) at a cost of \$76,900.00 pending receipt of approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education was presented for approval (**Bid Tabulation per Exhibit B**). The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Mrs. Bell-Perry noted that there was no increase in some of the administrative salaries in the CMAVTS budget due to the hiring of new individuals for the positions. Mr. Yeager noted that the Vo-Tech did undergo an energy conservation project and cut their usage by 15 percent, but their costs increased by 45 percent. Mr. Savitski asked how many Southern students attended the Vo-Tech school. Dr. Lonoconus replied that approximately 42 students attended.

Mrs. Bell-Perry asked for clarification on the Spirit Club. Mr. Caputo replied that Mrs. Kanaskie started the club. The goal is to try to promote school spirit for activities that don't have cheerleaders. It will give recognition to some groups that don't normally get recognized. The account is needed for fundraising.

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, to accept the resignation of Kathy Abraczinskas as Volunteer Assistant Cheerleading Coach effective February 28, 2006, was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Yeager, to accept the resignation of Marc Osevala as Assistant Track & Field Coach effective February 15, 2006, was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Bittner and second by Slusser, employment of Thomas Donlan, Jr. as Assistant Track Coach for the 2005-2006 school year with 13.5 points and a salary of \$2,059 was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Bittner and second by Yeager, a Childbearing/Childrearing Leave for Allison Burrell beginning on or about May 24, 2006, and continuing through the second marking period of the 2006-2007 school year was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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On a motion by Yeager and second by Slusser, the addition of the following individuals to the 2005-2006 Substitute List effective March 14, 2006 (pending completion of all employment requirements) was presented for approval:

- William Fracalossi (K-12)
- Lori Taylor (Aide)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Starr, employment of the following individuals as After School Tutors (pending completion of all employment requirements) effective March 7, 2006, at the rates listed, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant was presented for approval:

- Leslie Bieber (\$20 per hour)
- Sharon Leisenring (\$20 per hour)
- Heather Ann Breining (\$10 per hour)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Bittner and second by Slusser, to designate the following students as Volunteer After School Tutors effective as listed was presented for approval:

- Samantha Widger (effective March 3, 2006)
- Melissa Dobson (effective March 14, 2006)
- Alyssa Carl (effective March 14, 2006)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, changing Susan Krock from Substitute Bus/Van Driver to Regular Run Driver effective March 14, 2006 (pending completion of all employment requirements) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

Mr. Slusser asked who would monitor the home-schooled students involved in district activities. Dr. Lonoconus replied that the administration and the home school provider are responsible for monitoring. There is a form that would need to be completed on a weekly basis by the provider.

Mr. Porter noted that he previously asked for copies of policies for individual sports and asked if they were available. Dr. Lonoconus replied that there is only one sport that he knows of that has a separate policy. He will provide a copy as soon as he receives it.

Mr. Porter asked if the calendar could be compressed to avoid going into the month of June. He noted that there were a lot of extra days built into the calendar. Dr. Lonoconus explained that they purposely schedule those days, because the highest spikes of discipline are during February and March. He also reported that he received input from parents regarding the spring recess. They did not want to lose the Monday as a snow make-up day due to travel plans over the holiday. It is also difficult to change graduation since it is held at Bloomsburg University. Dr. Lonoconus has already shared the draft calendar with the other Superintendents of the sending districts of the Vo-Tech school. Dr. Lonoconus noted that there was a piece of legislation that would have forced all schools to start after September 1st, but it was not passed.

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BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Yeager reported that he attended a PSBA new Board member program recently. He noted that in some districts, every item on the agenda has a policy number next to it and every policy relates to the Strategic Plan. He noted that it would be an interesting concept to investigate. Everything would be based on the policy manual. He also noted that it is discouraging to have meetings at 10:00 a.m. when most Board members are unable to attend. President Meyer agreed but noted that they rely on the administrators to relay the information.

Mr. Porter asked what happens to the additional income that is received over and above the amount allowable by the SAWW rate under Act 50. He questioned the district's obligation when there is more revenue received than what was budgeted. Solicitor Roberts replied that he believes that Act 50 has to do with the tax rates and not the actual revenue generated, but he would research it to confirm. Mr. Porter asked if the district would be required to lower real estate taxes the next year and if they would need to review all of the years the district was under Act 50.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District Resident, Mr. Richard Gotshall, asked why the cost of the Distance Learning class would not be covered by the Summer Program. Dr. Lonoconus replied that the Distance Learning classes are provided through colleges or universities and the students would need to pay the cost of the course, not the district. Mr. Gotshall questioned the services provided by PPL and Chevron. President Meyer replied that the Board and administration are looking into whatever ways are possible to save money on energy costs. The two companies have come in to evaluate the facilities and provide energy savings proposals.

District resident, Mr. Jerry Davis, asked if the Board was going to establish a policy regarding e-mail. Dr. Lonoconus replied that there already is an Acceptable Use policy in effect. Mr. Porter asked if the district monitors the Internet use. Dr. Lonoconus replied that they monitor what is coming in through filters. They also look for a large number of hits on new sites. If the sites are undesirable, they can be blocked. Mr. Porter asked how it is monitored. Dr. Lonoconus replied that Mr. Brian Davis has software that allows him to monitor the system. Mr. Porter asked if e-mails are monitored. Dr. Lonoconus replied negatively, but noted that filters are in place.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Slusser and second by Porter, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary