

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

The September 7, 2006, Special Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:09 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 (*Absent*)

Hugh Jones

Karl Meyer

Charles Porter

Ronald Savitski

Thomas Slusser

Paul Starr (*Absent*)

Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard Beierschmitt, Acting Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; district residents and members of the media.

AGENDA HEARING PERIOD

SPECIAL MEETING TOPIC

Solicitor Roberts announced that he had prepared a resolution, which should be approved by the Board. The resolution would include the names of the Tax Study Commission members. Six applications were received for the Commission from the following individuals:

- Amanda Bell-Perry
- Linda Bilinski
- Jerry Davis
- Thelma Helwig
- Linda Kashner
- Patrick Sassani

After a brief discussion, it was determined that Linda Bilinski and Thelma Helwig would be ineligible to serve on the Commission. Linda Bilinski is the Cleveland Township Tax Collector and would be considered an official of the district. Mrs. Helwig is related to an employee of the district, therefore, only four applicants remained and the minimum requirement for the Tax Study Commission is five members. No action was taken.

Solicitor Roberts advised the Board to retain a financial advisor to guide the Commission through the process. The district is not obligated to retain an advisor, but an advisor would gather all of the information and make a presentation to assist the Commission in making its recommendation to the Board. He noted that a set of operating procedures for the Commission would need to be adopted. Copies of the draft operating procedures would be distributed to Board members.

Mr. Porter was not comfortable excluding Tax Collectors from the Commission. Solicitor Roberts explained that a Tax Collector is considered an official of the district and is prohibited from serving and his recommendation would be against allowing them to serve.

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Solicitor Roberts gave a brief explanation of Act 1 and Governor Rendell's effort to provide tax relief. The Tax Study Commission's purpose is to make a non-binding recommendation to the Board regarding the district's form of taxation. The Board will make the final decision.

After a brief discussion, it was decided that the deadline for applications would be changed to September 11th and the resolution would be acted upon at the September 11th meeting. The press was asked to notify the public that additional applicants for the Tax Study Commission were needed.

President Meyer questioned the advantages and disadvantages of retaining a financial advisor. Solicitor Roberts explained that an advisor would collect the necessary data and would help walk the Commission through the process, and they would handle the public hearing. The disadvantage would be the cost. He noted that one firm, PFM, would cost between \$3,500 and \$4,000. Mr. Beierschmitt reported that a firm from State College would provide the service for \$2,000. Solicitor Roberts noted that he is familiar with PFM, but does not know the firm from State College. He noted that the advantage of retaining an advisor would be having someone shepherd the Commission through the process. Mr. Yeager noted that the Board would have to consider if the time that the administrators would have to spend researching and preparing data would be worth \$2,000. Mr. Beierschmitt added that another benefit would be that an advisor would provide a professional presentation. It was agreed that a motion to hire the firm from State College would be included on the next agenda, along with a motion to adopt a resolution to appoint a Tax Study Commission and to adopt the operating procedures.

BOARD COMMENTS

Solicitor Roberts announced that an executive session would be held following the meeting to discuss PHRC 200500630.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Slusser and second by Porter, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary