

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

The November 20, 2006, Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:31 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 (<i>Absent</i>)	Karl Meyer	Thomas Slusser
Elsie Bittner	Charles Porter	Paul Starr
Hugh Jones	Ronald Savitski	Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard F. Beierschmitt, Acting Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; Roy Clippinger, Pat Shultz, Roger Nunkester, Charles Reh, Robert Mehalick and Barbara Lombardo, Administrators; district residents and members of the media.

AGENDA HEARING PERIOD

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Beierschmitt's report included the following topics:

1.) He congratulated the Football team and coaching staff for their achievements so far this year. He noted that Coach Jim Roth has been invited to attend the All-American Bowl in San Antonio, Texas on January 4 and 5, 2007. It is an all expenses paid trip for Mr. Roth.

2.) Mr. Rodgers gave a brief background of the Tax Study Commission and then deferred to Mr. Eric Stahley, Chairman of the Tax Study Commission. Mr. Stahley introduced the members of the Tax Study Commission that were present and thanked the District Office staff for their assistance and support during the process. He presented an overview of the statement that was provided to Board members with the agenda packets (**Appendix A**). He noted that the Tax Commission felt that the Act 1 legislation is flawed. It does not accomplish tax relief for all residents. It basically shifts the tax burden from one segment of the population to another. The Commission was also inclined to make the recommendation that no changes be made to the current tax structure, however under Act 1, they did not have that option. They were, at the least, required to recommend an increase of the .4 percent minimum. The Commission recommends an Earned Income Tax (EIT) because the mechanism to collect an EIT is already in place. Implementing a Personal Income Tax collection system prior to the July 1st implementation of Act 1 would be too cumbersome. Based on the 2007 figures, any property owner with a combined income under \$42,310 would see tax relief. Anyone with income over that amount would end up paying more in EIT than they would receive in property tax relief. The Commission asked that if the Board should choose to accept their recommendation that the document be posted on the district website so any other residents of the district could access the document and enable them to make an informed decision when the ballot measure comes up in the May primary. Mr. Yeager asked if everyone would need to reapply for the homestead/farmstead exemption. Mr. Stahley replied that it was his understanding that if an

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Page 2

individual has already been approved, reapplying would not be necessary. President Meyer thanked the members of the Tax Study Commission for taking the time and effort to accomplish the task. Mr. Yeager asked when a decision had to be made by the Board. Solicitor Roberts noted that the Board had to decide by March 13, 2007.

3.) Brian Davis gave a Power Point presentation regarding the Classrooms for the Future Grant. He along with Dr. Lonoconus and Mr. Caputo submitted a 29-page grant application on June 30, 2006. On September 20, 2006, he was notified that Southern Columbia was one of the 79 out of 189 schools that received the grant. It is a three-year grant and the district does not have to competitively reapply for years two and three. The goal of the grant is to increase the use of technology in the classrooms and to change the attitude of students toward learning. A requirement of the grant is to hire a Technology Integration Coach. The grant provides an additional \$40,000 to fund the position. The grant targets grades 9 through 12 in the core subject areas. Mr. Davis reported that initial prices from vendors are very cost effective, but he has been asked not to release any preliminary prices. He noted that when the district wants to purchase additional equipment not related to the grant, it will be able to use the vendor contract associated with the grant, which will save the district a great deal of money. There will be professional development training provided for teachers. The cost of subs will need to be included in the grant budget. The district will need to look at upgrading the network and possibly the bandwidth due to the addition of 200 computers. Mr. Davis anticipates that equipment will start arriving in January.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Curriculum - Elsie Bittner, Chairperson, reported that the committee met prior to the meeting. She noted that if a student needs any type of accommodation, such as Braille or large-print materials, the materials must be available when regular materials are being distributed to other students. Special materials must be readily available. The committee discussed the advanced placement audit. The district currently has seven advanced placement courses. The teachers need to review their advanced placement courses and submit the information to the College Board. The due date for the report is June 1st, but the teachers would like to submit the reports by the end of February, to allow for any changes that might be necessary to the advanced placement courses. If the district does not reach the criteria that the College Board requires, it could lose advanced placement status for one year. Less than 50 percent of the students taking the advanced placement courses are actually taking the exams for college credit. The committee would like to look into a policy that would require students to take the exam if they would participate in an advanced placement course. A question arose as to whether the district would be responsible for the cost of the exam if it becomes a requirement. Also discussed was the possibility that if a student would earn an "A" in the course, the district would pay for the exam. The TV Production I, II and III courses are in need of new equipment. Students that are participating in the news program are not in any of the TV Production courses, so they would like to make some changes in the requirements for future courses. They discussed the possibility of eliminating the TV Production courses. Mr. Reh recommended the continuation of the program. Mr. Porter asked who was responsible for the district technology budget. Mr. Rodgers replied that the responsibility is currently with the Superintendent with the assistance of the Business Manager. President Meyer recommended that the administration plan for the course. It would be eliminated at a later time if necessary.

The committee discussed the curriculum that is written by all of the teachers and whether the district should share it or possibly sell it. They want input from the board. Mr. Clippinger

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Page 3

noted that he received five requests to give the district's curriculum to other districts. President Meyer noted that it should be discussed by the Policy Committee. Mr. Porter questioned the actual ownership of the curriculum because of state funding received by the district.

Mr. Yeager noted that he views the advanced placement exams as a way to evaluate whether the district is teaching the correct information. He recommended that the board look into finding a way to increase participation in the exams.

Negotiations and Personnel - Karl Meyer reported that the committee met with the finalist for the elementary principal position and they were impressed with the candidate. The committee is recommending the individual for the position and the item is on the agenda.

Policy - Hugh Jones, Chairperson, reported that the committee met prior to the meeting. They disseminated a model policy concerning the use of electronic devices in the school district. The policy would prohibit student possession and use of laser pointers, telephone pagers, beepers and cell phones with photo or video capability. The committee is currently looking at model and sample policies to develop a policy suitable for the district.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

On a motion by Slusser and second by Jones, the Treasurer's Reports were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

MINUTES AND INVOICES

On a motion by Yeager and second by Savitski, the minutes of October 9 (Special Meeting) and October 9 (Regular Meeting) and October 16, 2006, were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Savitski and second by Yeager, General Fund invoices in the amount of \$473,417.99 and Capital Reserve Fund invoices in the amount of \$7,500 were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – FISCAL

On a motion by Savitski and second by Slusser, budgetary transfers in the 2006-07 budget to ensure proper accounting (**per Exhibit A**) were presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Starr, paying December 2006 bills with terms equal to or less than "Net 45 Days," was submitted for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Jones, to retain the law firm of Carl Beard to represent the district in negotiations with the Southern Columbia Area Education Association at an hourly rate of \$130.00, was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Savitski and second by Starr, to accept the Single Audit Report from Schaeffer, Jones, Eichner & Wagner, L.L.P. for the fiscal year 2005-2006 (**per Exhibit B**) was presented for approval. The report contains no findings and no Management Letter was received. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Page 4

On a motion by Porter and second by Starr, to adopt a Resolution pertaining to Act 1 and the recommendation of the Tax Study Commission (per Exhibit C) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, to accept the resignation of Philip Miccio from the positions of Administrative Assistant for Safety and Security and Regular Run Bus Driver effective December 1, 2006, was presented for approval. Mr. Miccio has been with the district since December 1999. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Savitski, employment of Joseph Shirvinski as Elementary Principal effective on or before January 19, 2006 (pending completion of all employment requirements) at an annual salary of \$68,000 (prorated) was presented for approval. His benefits are as per the Act 93 Agreement. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Yeager, employment of the following Support Teachers for the 2006-2007 effective November 21, 2006 school year at the contracted rate (\$709/prorated) was presented for approval:

- Kristen Vitkauskus - Secondary Science (for Warren Merkel)
- Sharon Leisenring - 5th Grade (for Maria Malfara)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Savitski, employment of Ian McCoog for the position of Classrooms for the Future Coach (10-month position) effective November 28, 2006, (pending completion of all employment requirements) for the 2006-2007 school year, at a salary of \$36,000, which will be funded by the Classrooms for the Future Grant was presented for approval. The position is contingent upon continued funding from the grant. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, employment of Benjamin Chere for the position of 2nd Shift Custodian effective November 28, 2006 (pending completion of all employment requirements); salary and benefits per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Slusser, a Memorandum of Understanding between Southern Columbia Area School District and AFSCME Local 1864 (**per Exhibit D**) was presented for approval. After a brief discussion, Mr. Porter made a motion to amend the Memorandum of Understanding to cap the number of days that could be donated at 60 and to provide that anyone donating days would have the number of days for which they could be paid reduced by the number of days donated. With no second, the original motion was reconsidered. Mr. Porter noted that his attempt to amend the motion was not due to any dissatisfaction with the employee. By roll call vote, the original motion carried; 7-Yes, 1-No (Porter voted No).

On a motion by Jones and second by Savitski, employment of Robert Eick (Substitute Teacher) as the After School Enrichment Program Coordinator effective November 16, 2006, at a rate of \$20/hour, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Page 5

Centers Grant, was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – POLICY AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, the second reading and adoption of new Policy 810.3 School Bus Idling (Per Exhibit E) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Yeager, district participation in the Pennsylvania Heartland Coalition and the Pennsylvania Heartland Athletic League was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, the Hearing Report and Adjudication pertaining to Student Disciplinary Matter 2006-1 was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, to accept the donation of an addition to the Band Boosters concession stand by the Southern Columbia Area Music Boosters was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

BOARD COMMENTS

President Meyer reminded board members that he had asked them to think about the board minutes and whether the board secretary should continue reporting the minutes in detail or limit them to what is required. He would like to discuss the matter further in December. Mr. Porter noted that he would like to see the detailed minutes continue for the benefit of the public. Mr. Yeager noted that he would like to see the board meetings taped and posted on the district web site for public access. Mr. Davis noted that the district does not have the equipment to accommodate that request.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District resident, Mr. Blaine Madara, reiterated what was said earlier in the meeting in reference to the TV Production course. He noted that it is a valuable program and he would like to see it continue. He also reported that senior class trips have been held for the past five years, but he did not know how they were funded.

Solicitor Roberts noted that there would be an executive session prior to adjournment to consult with counsel concerning pending litigation; Commonwealth vs. Wilcox. The Board entered into executive session at 9:37 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting at 10:28 p.m. with all members present.

On a motion by Slusser and second by Savitski, to authorize and direct Charles Porter, Director of the Southern Columbia Area School Board, to make an impact statement on behalf of the Board in connection with the case of Commonwealth vs. Wilcox was presented for approval. By roll call vote, the motion carried; 7-Yes, 1-No (Yeager voted No).

Solicitor Roberts reported that the executive session was held not only to consult with counsel regarding the Wilcox case, but also to discuss a student discipline matter.

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Page 6

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Slusser and second by Savitski, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.
The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary