

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

The February 12, 2007, Board Meeting of the Southern Columbia Area School District Board of Directors convened in the High School Library at 7:40 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 (*Absent*)
Elsie Bittner
Hugh Jones

Karl Meyer
Charles Porter
Ronald Savitski (*Absent*)

Thomas Slusser (*Absent*)
Paul Starr
Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard Beierschmitt, Acting Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; Roy Clippinger, Joseph Shirvinski, Roger Nunkester, Robert Mehalick 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 as well as several Fiscal Items.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Beierschmitt's report included the following topics:

- 1). He announced that PSSA Writing testing began in grades 5, 8 and 11.
- 2.) He, Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Mehalick will be looking at several Penske rental trucks in Hazleton to see if any of them would be suitable as a band truck.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Activities - Paul Starr, Chairperson reported that no meeting was held prior to the board meeting.

Facilities & Services - Michael Yeager, Chairperson, reported that the committee met on February 1st. Mr. Shirvinski reported that a letter was sent home to all parents in grades K through 6 concerning students being dropped off as early as 6:45 a.m. with no supervision. Staff doesn't arrive until approximately 7:25 a.m. He felt it was a safety issue. The doors are now locked until 7:25 a.m. Staff members who were willing are now supervising students in the large group area and the gymnasium. Students are not waiting in the lobby area. The buses now drop off as soon as they arrive around 7:30 a.m. The traffic lines that have caused parents to drop their children off by the gas pumps, by the district office and in other areas where students are crossing traffic patterns unsupervised, have been eliminated. The new system seems to be working well.

Two high school physical education teachers spoke to the committee about a Physical Education program grant. They will do more research. The grant application is due April 1, 2007. There is a gentleman that charges a minimal amount to write the grants. The two successful grants that he wrote were each in excess of \$300,000. The grant funds cannot be used for any type

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of renovations or construction; only for equipment and to increase the knowledge of the faculty. There is a ten percent match required.

Representatives from FMS gave a PowerPoint presentation that dealt with the gymnasium and auxiliary lighting, exterior door replacement and security measures. They did the assessment of the lighting and put together a packet that contains their recommendations for lighting systems and costs. They also looked at the exterior doors and gave the committee an idea of which doors needed to be replaced and the associated costs. The committee discussed coming up with an itemized list of all of the different projects they have discussed. Mr. Geffken reported that the bearings on the heating system in the gymnasium are bad. The repair cost was approximately \$40,000, but the estimates go up to \$100,000 and \$200,000 based on different options. He reported that the equipment is from 1961.

Mr. Yeager reported that he was present at the Internet Safety presentation in the auditorium and noted that he kept his coat on because of the temperature. Different options for the auditorium windows have been discussed several times. They discussed the switch in the sound and light booth. The problem was a delay switch. The electrical work had been performed correctly. The electrical problem at the bus barn will be corrected in the near future by Mr. Hampton. Mr. Yeager approached the Roaring Creek Water Conservation Association and talked to them about the school district as well as Mrs. Vitkauskus' environmental class getting involved in the storm water run-off project. They were excited about the opportunity. They agreed that it would be the ideal location for a demonstration project. Mr. Beierschmitt noted that Mrs. Vitkauskus is moving forward with the project. They need building plans and topographical maps of the campus.

President Meyer questioned the status of the heating issues in the elementary. Mr. Geffken replied that a blower was replaced, but it took several hours for the building to reach a comfortable temperature.

Finance - Charlie Porter reported that they discussed foundations. Mr. Rodgers reported that he and Mr. Beierschmitt had a conference call with Mr. Richard Caputo of Stevens & Lee. A copy of information provided by him was included in the Friday Letter packet along with information about Central Columbia's foundation. Mr. Rodgers recommended that the entire board should hear the information presented by Mr. Caputo. He made it very clear that a foundation would only be as successful as the resources that would be invested as far as time and money. It was determined that the entire board would like to hear the presentation. Mr. Rodgers agreed to try and schedule a presentation.

The committee also discussed a band truck, a replacement bus and the bids for the scrap aluminum bleacher parts. Mr. Rodgers reported that acceptance of the highest bid for the aluminum was on the agenda for action. He added that the gentleman with the highest bid submitted a check for the total bid along with a letter stating that he would remove the aluminum within 45 days.

Another topic of discussion was the Safety Committee. Mr. Rodgers reported that the initial meeting of the committee is scheduled for Wednesday, February 14th at 3:30 p.m. He noted that it was difficult to get all of the individuals together, so they plan to hold the initial meeting and set up channels for the different individuals to report back to the committee in their specific areas. They will also change the meeting times to accommodate varying schedules. It appears that a year's worth of meetings and documentation is required before a reduction in the district's workers compensation insurance premium would be realized.

Two resolutions regarding Act 1 are on the agenda for action. Mr. Eric Stahley, Chairperson of the Tax Study Commission, was present at the meeting to answer any questions. Solicitor Roberts explained that the first resolution on the agenda would be to accept the

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recommendation of the Tax Study Commission to raise the earned income tax from 1.5 to 1.9 percent. The second resolution would authorize and direct the board secretary to advertise a notice that there will be a public hearing on the referendum question on March 12th and following that public hearing, the board will take action to officially approve the specific form of the ballot question that will appear at the May election, which needs to be done by March 13th. Solicitor Roberts noted that there is a difference of opinion concerning the advertising requirements. He recommended that the notice be advertised once per week for three consecutive weeks in accordance with the requirements of the Newspaper Publishing Act.

Another issue discussed by the committee was possibly applying for some grants. Mr. Rodgers added that it appears that there are some matching funds required, but he is still looking into it. Mr. Yeager reported that the Growing Greener II grants are due April 13th. The Roaring Creek Water Conservation Association was meeting to gather further information to support a grant application.

Vo-Tech - Mike Yeager reported that he received the preliminary budget from Columbia-Montour Area Vocational-Technical School. The increase for next year is 3.15 percent. Southern's portion is increased by \$10,000. They authorized a career camp in July for 6th, 7th and 8th graders at a cost of \$90 per camper. If any students want to apply, the applications are due by March 1st. They are only accepting 172 students. There are only 32 positions available for students with IEPs. Negotiations are underway. Vo-Tech is using 4-Sight testing.

ITEMS – TREASURER’S REPORTS

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

ITEMS – FISCAL

On a motion by Jones and second by Bittner, to adopt a Resolution pursuant to Act 1 and accepting the recommendation of the Tax Study Commission (per Exhibit B) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Starr, to adopt a Resolution pursuant to Act 1 directing the Board Secretary to advertise a notice and approving the form of such (per Exhibit C) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Porter and second by Yeager, to award a bid for a used 72-passenger School Bus to Brightbill Body Works (Lebanon, PA) at a cost of \$21,875.00 less \$1,875 for the cost of on-spot chains and installation (per Exhibit D) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Bittner, to award the bid for the disposal of Scrap Aluminum Bleacher parts to Jones Enterprises, Coal Township in the amount of \$4,238.05 (per Exhibit E) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Yeager, to refund the sum of \$830.95, representing real estate taxes erroneously paid to the District, to Thomas M. Mensch was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Yeager and second by Bittner, to accept the resignation of Darlynn Scherer from the position of 3-Hour Cafeteria Worker effective December 22, 2006, was presented for approval. Mrs. Scherer has been with the district since August 2001. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Bittner and second by Starr, to approve changing Amelia Schetroma from 2-Hour Cafeteria Worker to 3-Hour Cafeteria Worker effective January 18, 2007 was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Bittner, the addition of the following individuals to the 2006-2007 Substitute List effective February 13, 2007, except as listed (pending completion of all employment requirements) was presented for approval:

- Adam Hoagland (Biology) - effective February 2, 2007
- Robert Scott (Aide) - effective February 6, 2007
- Stephanie Dluge (Elementary)
- Roseann Noll (Elementary)
- Patricia Kisseleff (Elementary)

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Bittner and second by Yeager, an employment agreement with Terry Sharrow for the position of Athletic Director was presented for approval. After a discussion regarding the benefits language of the agreement, the administration requested an executive session following the meeting to discuss a personnel matter and real estate action. A motion was made by Porter and a second by Starr to table the motion until the next meeting. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Yeager and second by Starr, to change Tricia Hoffman from Volunteer Assistant Softball Coach to Assistant Softball Coach for the 2006-2007 school year, with 12.0 points and a salary of \$1,845 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 Nadeen Swab (Teacher) beginning on or about April 2, 2007, and continuing through the end of the 2006-2007 school year was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

On a motion by Jones and second by Yeager, the following individuals as After School Tutors effective January 17, 2007 (pending completion of all employment requirements) at a rate of \$10.00 per hour, which will come from proceeds of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant was presented for approval:

- Amy DeSantis
- Stephanie Dluge
- Ashley Heckard
- Kathleen Holden
- Brendan Kenny

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- Maureen McGuire
- Kasey Motter
- Casey Oberdorf
- Lindsay Regec
- Erin Schoppy
- Travis Williams

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Yeager and second by Bittner, Homebound Instruction for an elementary student beginning February 13, 2007, until further evaluation by a physician for a maximum of 6 hours per week, was presented for approval. Prior to voting, the item was opened for public discussion. With no comment, the motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Mr. Yeager commented on the Gifted field trip to the Bodies Exhibition and noted that it would also be a great opportunity for members of the Anatomy class.

After a discussion regarding Policy 237 Electronic Devices, it was determined that the administration would need to make additional changes to the policy before it would be brought before the board for approval.

Mr. Jones explained that the only change to Policy 006 Meetings was to change the meeting schedule from two meetings per month to one meeting per month. Mr. Porter noted that he preferred two meetings because the board members have time to think about items that were presented and discussed at the first meeting. It also gives the public a chance to be informed on action being taken. Mr. Jones noted that a work session could be held prior to the meeting and all business could be handled at one meeting.

BOARD COMMENTS

President Meyer announced that an executive session would be held following the meeting to discuss real estate purchase and two personnel items.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

District resident, Mr. Richard Gotshall, commented that some of the public feels that they would be shut out if the board decides to go to only one meeting per month. He asked the board members to take that into consideration when making their decision. Mr. Gotshall also asked how many students attend Vo-Tech. Mr. Yeager replied that currently approximately 41 or 42 students are in attendance. Mr. Gotshall asked if the water run-off meetings are open to the public. Mr. Yeager responded affirmatively. Mr. Gotshall asked if a preliminary budget had been developed. Mr. Rodgers replied that it was not yet prepared.

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ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Jones and second by Bittner, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary