

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

The March 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 (*Absent*)
Hugh Jones (*Absent*)

Karl Meyer
Charles Porter
Ronald Savitski

Thomas Slusser
Paul Starr
Michael Yeager

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard Beierschmitt, Acting Superintendent; Daniel Rodgers, Business Manager; Tresa Britch, Board Secretary; Richard J. Roberts, Solicitor; 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 Fiscal Item B.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Beierschmitt's report included the following topics:

- 1.) He congratulated the middle school students that participated in the CSIU Computer Fair. Southern Columbia had the highest number of participants.
- 2.) Over 30 students would be attending the FBLA competition.
- 3.) He congratulated the Girls and Boys Basketball teams for their post-season competition and also Josh Marks for competing in the State Wrestling competition.
- 4.) Seven applications were received for the superintendent position. The board is currently analyzing the applications to select candidates to be interviewed.
- 5.) He requested an executive session following the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Activities - Paul Starr, Chairperson, reported that Basketball Cheerleading was discussed and the committee is looking for direction from the board regarding funding. New uniforms would be needed. Mick Fleming is resigning as Girls Basketball Coach. It was determined that the position would be posted and advertised. When asked who would be involved in the interview process, Mr. Sharrow replied that normally the high school principal, athletic director and members of the Activities Committee are involved. They discussed the swimming cooperative agreement with Bloomsburg Area School District. There is a big turn-out for spring sports. The Boys Basketball Team won the district championship and the Girls Basketball Team placed 4th in the district. Josh Marks placed 6th in the state wrestling tournament and Jeff Fleming competed in

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state bowling competition. After a brief discussion, it was determined that the Girls Basketball Coach position would be posted internally for ten days and advertised in local newspapers.

Facilities & Services - Michael Yeager, Chairperson, announced that the committee met on March 1st. They discussed a grant and the possibility of hiring an outside person to write the PEPP Grant. They discussed the priority list and ranked the projects. He asked Mr. Rodgers to provide all of the board members with the priority list. The committee decided that they needed to solicit bids for the gym ventilator system and hallway lighting in the high school. They discussed some minor issues with the softball field, hockey field and bandstand. He reported that Mr. Geffken would be taking his test for wastewater management. Mr. Rodgers added that the committee talked about some additional projects, but the committee requested to look at the Capital Reserve budget for the 2007-2008 school year to determine what could possibly be accomplished over the summer.

Finance - Karl Meyer, Chairperson, announced that the committee discussed educational and athletic foundations and a 4-hour ACCESS secretary position. They discussed the FBLA competition and agreed that the district should cover the trip. The administration received some quotes and is currently negotiating on a band truck. The mechanics will be sent to look at the vehicle before it is purchased. They discussed the 2007-2008 fuel prices. A food services survey will be sent to several grades to acquire student input. A tax collector resigned but has already been replaced by the township. A special budget meeting will be held on March 22nd. Mr. Porter noted that the deadline for the fuel contract is March 23rd. He asked Solicitor Roberts to review the contract. He noted that the district is committing itself to an unknown price. Mr. Rodgers stated that it is due to CSIU needing to know a quantity before it can secure a price.

President Meyer introduced Mr. Richard S. Caputo of Stevens & Lee Lawyers and Consultants, who gave a presentation on foundations. He reported that educational foundations are becoming more popular but noted that they have no advantage, other than a psychological advantage, over a school district, except for tax credits for corporate donors. He noted that there is a lot of work and cost required to establish a foundation. The minimum cost is approximately \$5,000. He discussed different options for the board of directors of a foundation. Mr. Caputo noted that a foundation would only be successful if resources and time are invested. Mr. Rodgers asked if there is any advantage to setting up separate educational and athletic foundations. Mr. Caputo viewed it as a waste of money because of the duplication of setup and annual costs.

PUBLIC HEARING PURSUANT TO ACT 1

Solicitor Roberts announced that Act 1 requires a public hearing prior to the May Primary. Act 1 requires that there be a front-end referendum in the May 2007 Primary. There will be a ballot question at that time, which will ask the public to vote on whether or not to increase the earned income tax. The act required the creation of a Tax Study Commission. The Tax Study Commission made a recommendation, which was approved by the board. That ballot question asks for permission to increase the earned income tax .4 percent from an existing 1.5 percent to a new 1.9 percent. Mr. Eric Stahley, a member of the Tax Study Commission was present at the meeting. Following the hearing, the board has to approve the form of the ballot question, which has been advertised. The increase of .4 percent would generate approximately an additional \$778,000 and that money would be used to reduce real estate taxes for the most part. Act 1 does provide that 2 percent of that amount or roughly \$15,577 is eligible to be used for district operations for the 2007-2008 school year. If the measure were approved, there would be approximately \$219 available for farmstead and homestead exclusions for those people who have

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filed the proper forms and have qualified for the excusions. The hearing was opened to the public.

District resident, Ms. Tracy Wilson, asked if \$219 was a flat rate or if a formula is involved. Mr. Rodgers replied that a formula is used. It involves a determination of how much the .4 percent increase would generate, the amount of the average collections and the number of individuals that have qualified for the excusions. It varies based on combined household income. Mr. Stahley noted that the Tax Study Commission did not want to change anything, but under Act 1 they didn't have that option. They had to recommend an increase of at least 25 percent of the median assessed value. The Tax Study Commission agreed that Act 1 is not true tax reform. It is more of a tax shift. Mr. Yeager asked if he had the break-even figures for the next two years. Mr. Stahley replied that it would be \$54,007 for 2008-2009 and \$53,660 for 2009-2010. Mr. Beierschmitt noted that if the public votes down the ballot question, nothing will change.

BOARD PROCEDURE

On a motion by Slusser and second by Porter to approve the procedure of "block" voting at Board meetings with the blocks consisting of the following, was presented for approval:

1. Fiscal
2. Personnel
3. Policy and Programs

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS – TREASURER'S REPORTS

ITEMS – MINUTES/INVOICES

Mr. Porter pointed out the need for a correction to the February 19th board minutes under the Policy and Programs motion pertaining to board meetings. It was agreed that the minutes would be corrected to reflect that Mr. Porter voted "no" instead of Mr. Slusser.

ITEMS – FISCAL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager, to adopt a Resolution pursuant to Act 1 and approving the referendum question to be placed on the May 15, 2007, primary election ballot (per Exhibit B) was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

President Meyer asked what CSIU services are used by the district. Mr. Beierschmitt replied that the district receives guest teacher training, the Summer Arts Program, professional development, alternative education, cooperative purchasing, computer and technical services, and special education services. He noted that he would provide a breakdown to the board. Mr. Porter stated that part of the presentation from FMS stated that they could save money on supplies. Mr. Rodgers explained that the district has never committed to a lot of custodial supplies from CSIU. Mr. Geffken noted that the district has no storage area for bulk supplies.

ITEMS – PERSONNEL

On a motion by Slusser and second by Yeager the following items were presented for approval:

- A. To approve a 4-hour ACCESS Secretary position. The position is contingent upon continued funding through ACCESS.

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- B. To approve changing Diane Dobson from Substitute Bus/Van Driver to Regular Run Driver effective March 13, 2007.
- C. To approve changing Warren T. Smith, Jr. from Substitute Bus/Van Driver to Regular Run Driver effective March 13, 2007.
- D. To approve the addition of the following individuals to the 2006-2007 Substitute List effective March 13, 2007 (pending completion of all employment requirements):
 - Melissa Dement (Special Education)
 - Colleen Laskoski (Aide)
- E. To approve employment of Richard Price as an After School Tutor effective March 13, 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.
- F. To approve changing Cindy McHugh from a Substitute Aide to a 5-Hour Instructional Aide effective March 19, 2007 (pending completion of all employment requirements); salary and benefits per the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- G. To accept the resignation of Michael "Mick" Fleming from the position of Head Girls Basketball Coach effective March 9, 2007. Mr. Fleming has been in the position since September 1991.

The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

ITEMS - POLICY AND PROGRAMS

On a motion by Yeager and second by Slusser, Homebound Instruction for a middle school student beginning March 13, 2007, until further evaluation by a physician for a maximum of 1.5 hours per week was presented for approval. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Yeager commended Mr. Nunkester for sending his daughter a card congratulating her for going to County Chorus. He also noted that the field trip to the Bodies Exhibition in New York City was an excellent trip.

Mr. Porter announced that the Negotiations Committee of the board would be meeting with the teacher representatives on the 15th at 5:30 p.m. He noted that Carl Beard would be present.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC

It was announced again that an executive session would be held immediately following the Board meeting to discuss personnel issues.

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ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Slusser and second by Porter, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tresa J. Britch
Board Secretary