

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2024

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District conducted a virtual and in person Board meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2024. This meeting was recorded.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Daniel Santia, Board President.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Santia. Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Anitre' Bell
Carla Buxton
Victoria Gill
Anissa Klessner
Jeanette Miller
Bethany Pistorius
Daniel Santia

Members Absent
Daniel Caton
Lindsay Zupsic

Also in attendance were: Dr. Jeffrey Beltz, Superintendent, John Salopek, Solicitor; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Rob Kartychak, Lou Ceccarelli and Donna Steff, Principals; and visitors.

Good New in our Schools reports were presented by Dr. Kartychak, Mr. Ceccarelli and Mrs. Steff. Copies of their reports are attached to these minutes.

An Executive Session was held prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel and litigation matters. This announcement is being made to be in compliance with Act 84 of 1986, Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law, as amended.

MOTION #1

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, to approve the agenda as written.

Mr. Santia asked for approval of minutes.

MOTION #2

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Victoria Gill, to approve the December 5, 2023 Reorganization meeting and the January 9, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

Effective October 12, 2021, a maximum of thirty minutes total will be reserved during the Board meeting for community members who request to speak. At any time, the Board may allow additional time for the visitors portion of the Board meeting.

Whether the community member is participating virtually, or in-person, the community member will:

- State their name
- Have up to three minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board
- Only be able to speak once during the visitors portion of the board meeting
- Have their time begin when the individual begins to speak

It is recommended that community members wishing to speak during the visitors portion email the Board Secretary prior to the board meeting, however the online chat will be monitored during the visitors portion of the meeting for anyone wishing to speak.

A response may be given during the meeting, however, it is also possible that no response be provided during the Board meeting. The Board will instruct the Superintendent, the Business Administrator and/or the Solicitor to either respond to the inquiry or do further research and report back to the Board and/or the resident. For any question that requires a response, the District will contact the individual directly to respond or will share responses at the following Board meeting.

Brad Hiltz

Mr. Hiltz congratulated Dr. Utchell on her new position at West Allegheny School District. With her departure, Mr. Hiltz had several questions regarding how the District will handle the special education program until her replacement is selected. He was concerned about the continuation of ongoing programs such as Bocce Buddies, Best Buddies Club and Special Olympics and asked if the District still plans to implement the PAES lab at the Senior High School. Mr. Hiltz asked if extended school year dates had been selected and, in the absence of Dr. Utchell, who would oversee the program. Mr. Hiltz questioned whether the District would permit parent volunteers to sit on the hiring committee.

Dr. Beltz explained to Mr. Hiltz that Dr. Utchell will remain in the District through March 31, 2024 and that all current programs will continue. He said that the District will advertise for her replacement immediately and that he would welcome a conversation with any parent interested in sharing their thoughts about the qualifications needed to fill the position. He clarified that District administration would complete the interview process.

Educational/Curriculum/Instruction by Anissa Klessner, Co-Chair**MOTION #3**

By Anissa Klessner, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the High School Course Curriculum Guide for 2024-2025 School Year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #4

By Anissa Klessner, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the Junior High School Course Curriculum Guide for 2024-2025 School Year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #5

By Anissa Klessner, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the creation of the Best Buddies Club at the Junior High School with Carly Belich and Monique Urick as co-sponsors. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #6

By Anissa Klessner, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved free school privileges for Kelsie Kamerling to attend Hopewell Junior High School for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

The Board was informed that the Kennywood school picnic is scheduled for June 12, 2024.

Athletics by Victoria Gill, Co-Chair**MOTION #7**

By Victoria Gill, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Central Valley School District for students from the Central Valley Middle School swim team to utilize the pool for practice for the 2023-2024 season at a cost of \$50.00 per use. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Buildings and Grounds by Anitre' Bell**MOTION #8**

By Anitre' Bell, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the request of Brenna Wandel, Varsity Tennis Coach, to use the varsity tennis courts to conduct a youth tennis clinic May 13, 2024 through May 17, 2024 from 3:40 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #9

By Anitre' Bell, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the recommendation of the High School Girl's Softball Coaching Staff, the Athletic Director is directed to obtain quotes to move the outfield fence to fall within specified distance regulations. After review of the responsible quote and prior to acceptance of the quote by the District, the Athletic Director shall require the deposit of the quoted amount by the outside sponsor such that the Fence Project would be at no cost to the District. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Finance and Budget by Jeanette Miller, Co-ChairMOTION #10

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, to approve items (1) and (2) and to ratify item (3) as presented, in accordance with School Board's agreement for grouping items in a single motion. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

1. General Fund List of Bills in the amount of \$1,063,057.54
2. Cafeteria Fund List of Bills in the amount of \$103,842.45
3. Payments to be ratified in the amount of \$997,098.35

MOTION #11

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the First Amendment to Rooftop Lease With Option by and between the District and T-Mobile Central LLC regarding the extension of the Lease for the cell tower array located on the Jr. High School chimney smokestack for two (2) additional five (5) year terms from December 4, 2026 until December 3, 2036 and continuing the annual three (3%) percent annual rent escalations. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #12

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the request of Aliquippa Bucktails to purchase parcels 65-011-1206.000-01-1 and 65-011-1212.000-01-1 located in Hopewell Township out of the Beaver County Repository. All delinquent taxes from 2020-2021 tax year and prior years are exonerated. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Personnel by Bethany Pistorius, ChairMOTION #13

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Jeanette Miller, accepted the resignation of George Vargon, substitute custodian, effective January 9, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of Terry Borkovic, Middle School Girls Volleyball head coach, at a stipend of \$1,428.50. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #15

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Alexis Thompson, Middle School Girls Volleyball assistant coach, at a stipend of \$1,428.50. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #16

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, approved the employment of Carl Platko, Director of Transportation, at a salary of \$68,000.00, effective January 24, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #17

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, accepted the resignation of Carl Platko, bus utility attendant, effective January 23, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #18

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the employment of Tyler Ditoro, bus driver, effective January 16, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #19

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, approved the employment of Jason Ricci, bus driver, effective January 17, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #20

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the employment of the following individuals as assistant varsity football coaches. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

- a. Matt Mottes
- b. Zachary Rosa
- c. Tim Morgan
- d. Guy Martini
- e. Jon Baldwin
- f. Tom Pipkins

- g. Reiker Welling
- h. Craedel Kimbrough
- i. Paul Mann

MOTION #21

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anitre' Bell, accepted the resignation Dr. Lynn Utchell, Director of Special Education, effective March 31, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #22

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the two (2) year extension of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Hopewell Educational Support Personnel Association (Custodial Maintenance Personnel) for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Other Business

Mrs. Gill thanked the principals for their Good News reports. She said that she always truly enjoys them. She also congratulated Caroline Krawczynski, who was in the audience with her mother, for being selected 5th grade Student of the Month for December at the Junior High School.

Mrs. Pistorius said that the Holly Jolly Christmas show was excellent, as always, and that the yearly performance is one of her favorites during the holiday season. She believes that the Artist in Residence program and the B.F. Jones Memorial Library, which the concert benefits, are tremendous assets to the District.

Mr. Santia agreed that the Artist in Residence program and Dave Bufalini, who is responsible for bringing the program to Hopewell, has done an exceptional job through the years providing instruments, artists and creative programs for students.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beltz thanked Dr. Utchell for her 14 years of service to the District and wished her well in her new position with the West Allegheny School District.

Dr. Beltz explained that he had sent a letter to District families explaining the district-wide feasibility study and the process moving forward. He said that all information and presentations regarding the study can be found on the District website, www.hopewellarea.org.

Solicitor's Report

Nothing to report.

Upcoming Board Meetings

February 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – Board Room and Virtual

February 27, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – Board Room and Virtual

MOTION by Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, that the meeting be adjourned.
MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Mr. Santia adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Daniel Santia, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary