

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REORGANIZATION MEETING
DECEMBER 5, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District met in regular session on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 2354 Brodhead Road, Hopewell Township for the purpose of effecting a permanent organization of the Board in compliance with Section 404 of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and any other business which may come before the Board of Directors.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Nancy Barber, Board Secretary, read the Certificates of Election and administered the oath of office to our newly elected and reelected Board members.

Mrs. Barber, read the resignation letter of Mrs. Buxton from the Region 1, 2-year term Board seat. Mrs. Buxton has been seated as the elected member from Region 1 for the 4-year term ending in 2027.

Mr. Santia, President of the Board, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Carla Buxton
Daniel Caton
Jeanette Miller
Bethany Pistorius
Daniel Santia
Lindsay Zupsic

Members Absent
Anitre' Bell
Victoria Gill

Also in attendance were: Dr. Jeffrey Beltz, Superintendent, John Salopek, Solicitor; Debbie Engelman, Business Administrator; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Rob Kartychak and Donna Steff, Principals; Dr. Joel Roth, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Don Short, Athletic Director and visitors.

An Executive Session was held prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel. 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 Dan Caton, to approve the agenda as written.

For purposes of reorganization, Motion by Dan Caton, seconded by Jeanette Miller, to nominate John Salopek as Temporary President. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

Mr. Salopek called for nominations for President. Motion by Lindsay Zupsic to nominate Daniel Santia as President of the Board. There being no other nominations for President, Motion by Dan Caton, second by Carla Buxton, nominations for President closed.

Roll Call vote for Daniel Santia as President of the Board of Directors. Motion carried by a vote of five to one, with Mrs. Pistorius voting no.

Mr. Salopek called for nominations for Vice President. Motion by Carla Buxton to nominate Dan Caton as Vice President of the Board. There being no other nominations for Vice President, Motion by Jeanette Miller, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, nominations for Vice President closed.

Roll call vote for Dan Caton as Vice President of the Board of Directors. Motion carried by a vote of five to one, with Mrs. Pistorius voting no.

Officers were seated.

MOTION #2

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, to approve the November 28, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

At this time, Dan Engen, President, Draw Collective, updated the District's last feasibility study, which was completed in 2019. This presentation is a relaunch of a renewed facility master plan outline. Mr. Engen stated that the previous study focused on elementary facilities, but said that this plan will look at districtwide facilities and enrollment. The focus will be to provide a 21st century learning environment, eliminate educational, facility and staffing inequities, consolidate school buildings to add efficiency and reduce operational costs and to improve quality and long-term maintainability of facilities.

As a result of Mrs. Buxton's resignation from the 2-year board seat from Region 1, a vacancy on the Board was created. Candidates interested in filling the vacancy were asked to submit a letter of interest by December 1, 2023. Anissa Klessner, who had previously filled the vacancy, spoke of her desire to remain on the Board and continue the commitment she has made to the District.

Visitors

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.

No visitors wished to address the Board.

Mr. Santia continued with committee recommendations and discussion.

Finance and Budget by Lindsay Zupsic, Co-Chair

MOTION #3

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, to approve Resolution #15-2023, a Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District, certifying that the District will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the public schools for the following fiscal year by more than its index, which for the 2024-2025 school year is 7.0%. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #4

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, to approve the appointment of Diane Palsa as Delinquent Real Estate Tax Collector for Hopewell Township for 2023 school taxes for period December 31, 2023 through April 15, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #5

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, to approve the appointment of Debra Shaffer as Delinquent Real Estate Tax Collector for Independence Township for 2023 school taxes for period December 31, 2023 through April 15, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #6

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, to approve the appointment of Linda McCoy as Delinquent Real Estate Tax Collector for Raccoon Township for 2023 school taxes for period December 31, 2023 through April 15, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Legislative by Jeanette Miller, Chair**MOTION #7**

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Carla Buxton, to approve the Work and Business meeting dates for discussion and conducting any other general business that may come before the Board of Directors, as presented. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #8

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, to accept the resignation of Carla Buxton, effective immediately, for the elected position of School Director in Region 1 for the 2-year term ending the first Monday of 2025. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #9

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the appointment of Anissa Klesser as School Director in Region 1 for the 2-year term ending the first Monday of December 2025. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Personnel by Lindsay Zupsic, Chair**MOTION #10**

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the appointment of Deborah Engelman, Treasurer, effective December 5, 2023 through June 30, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #11

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of James Cassell, Elementary Assistant Principal, at a salary of \$75,000.00, pending final review of clearances. The employment start date is to be determined pending release from current employer, but the start date must occur no later than February 5, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #12

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the employment of Nina Hodges, long-term 1st grade substitute teacher at Independence Elementary School, effective December 1, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Other Business

None

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beltz said that the 2019 Feasibility Study is on the District website and that information regarding the updated study will also be posted.

Dr. Beltz welcomed Mrs. Engelman as the Business Administrator and Mr. Cassell as the new elementary assistant principal.

Lena Krutilla asked what decisions the District has already made about building renovations.

Dr. Beltz explained that the process is just beginning and that there will be many opportunities for discussions with all stakeholders with respect to renovations and realignment.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Salopek wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Upcoming Board Meetings

January 9, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – Board Room and Virtual

January 23, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – Board Room and Virtual

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

Mr. Santia adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Daniel Santia, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary