

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
MARCH 28, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District conducted a virtual and in person Board meeting on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. This meeting was recorded.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 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:

Carla Buxton
Daniel Caton
Matthew Erickson
Victoria Gill
Lori McKittrick
Jeanette Miller
Bethany Pistorius
Daniel Santia
Lindsay Zupsic (Participated via Zoom)

Also in attendance were: Dr. Jeffrey Beltz, Superintendent, John Salopek, Solicitor; Johannah Robb, Business Administrator; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Louis Ceccarelli, Gary Hutsler, and Donna Steff, principals; Dr. Joel Roth, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dennis Barber, Director of Technology; and visitors.

Good New in our Schools reports were presented by Dr. Roth on behalf of the Senior High School, Mr. Ceccarelli and Mr. Hutsler. Copies of their reports are attached to these minutes.

MOTION #1

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Jeanette Miller, to approve the agenda as written.

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

Mr. Santia asked for approval of minutes.

MOTION #2

By Jeanette Miller, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, to approve the February 28, 2023 and March 14, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

APPROVAL OF GROUPED ITEMSMOTION #3

By Carla Buxton, seconded by Victoria Gill, to approve items (1) through (3) as presented in accordance with School Board's agreement for grouping items in a single motion. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Tax Collectors' Report

1. Recommendation to accept report for taxes collected for the month of February 2023, as presented, and make said report a part of these minutes.

Treasurer's Report

2. Recommendation to accept report of the Treasurer for the month of February 2023 presented, and make said report a part of these minutes.

Financial Statements

3. Recommendation to accept Financial Statements for the month of February 2023, as presented, and make said statements a part of these minutes.

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.

Amanda Kuczma

Ms. Kuczma spoke in support of the teachers as they continue to negotiate a new contract. She said that teachers are a big part of children's lives and wanted to make sure they know they are valued and respected.

Amy Sutton

Ms. Sutton is concerned that there may be a teacher's strike in the event that a new contract cannot be reached. She had the following questions:

- How long can a strike last;
- What is the latest students would have to attend school in the summer;
- How would sports be affected;
- How would end of year testing be affected;
- What happens if you have planned a vacation when students have to make up lost time;
- Will air conditioning units be provided for each classroom;
- Will ESY dates change;
- Will next year's school calendar change;
- What is the status of the District's budget for 2023-2024 school year; and
- What is the status of the feasibility study.

Ms. Sutton also thanked the teachers for everything they do.

Mr. Santia stated that each member of the Board values teachers and they want to do what is fair for the entire Hopewell community. As stewards of the community, it is their responsibility not only to students and staff of the District, but every resident.

Deanna Hiltz

Mrs. Hiltz spoke as an advocate for teachers and believes that what they are asking for is deserved. She stated that her daughter has an IEP and her teachers give many hours of their own time to their students.

Margie Patton

Mrs. Patton is a retire Hopewell teacher and a resident of the District. She wanted to let the Board know that not only do teachers give of their own time to their students, but also financially. She also stated that students are successful because of teachers and that in person instruction is so important.

Krystyn Kokan

Mrs. Kokan explained that her daughter suffers from anxiety and that her elementary teachers have been wonderful supporting her needs. She reiterated that it is important for students to stay in school and that the teachers deserve a fair contract.

Mr. Santia said that as far as the Board is concerned, the public is invited to participate in contract negotiations.

Amy Sutton

Mrs. Sutton asked for confirmation that the public was welcome to participate in contract negotiations and that community members can be present for the next negotiating session. Mr. Santia said that as far as the Board is concerned, the public is welcome.

Jenifer Milligan

Mrs. Milligan stated that it was the Board's responsibility for keeping teachers and students from school during Covid. She stated that her children did not do well with remote learning. She stated that it was important for students to be in the classroom.

Educational/Curriculum/Instruction by Matthew Erickson, Chair

MOTION #4

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved free school privileges for Jorge Garcia-Vega Araujo, to attend Hopewell High School for the 2023-2024 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #5

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Mr. Katkich for Ronald Bushnell, Christopher Nguyen and Elijah Persi-Jones to attend the National Academic Games from April 21, 2023 through April 24, 2023 in Orlando, Florida. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #6

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved Resolution 2-2023 authorizing Dr. Jeffrey Beltz to sign any and all contracts, agreements, grants and/or licenses with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Further, said consent by Dr. Beltz shall be given via electronic signature. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Buildings and Grounds by Dan Caton, Chair

MOTION #7

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Hopewell Baseball Boosters, to place sponsorship banners on the outfield fence and on the home fan bleachers fence. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #8

By Dan Caton, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the request of Jeff Brunton, head varsity track coach, to use Tony Dorsett Stadium for a Junior High School track meet on April 21, 2023 beginning at 4:30 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #9

By Dan Caton, seconded by Lori McKittrick, approved the request of Brenna Wandel, varsity girls tennis coach, to use the varsity tennis courts on weekdays during May to conduct a youth tennis clinic for students in grades 7 through 12. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #10

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Joe Obeldobel and Wings of Moon to use the track at the Senior High School for practice beginning April 1, 2023 through July 30, 2023 on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Finance and Budget by Lori McKittrick, Co-Chair

MOTION #11

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Dan Caton, 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 \$721,526.58
2. Cafeteria Fund List of Bills in the amount of \$122,804.36
3. General Fund Payments to be ratified in the amount of \$1,997,078.31

MOTION #12

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the 2023-2024 Pay Schedule, as presented. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #13

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the 2023-2024 Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit general operating budget in the amount of \$1,608,913.00. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the exoneration of the following property tax collectors for uncollected 2022 taxes: Debra Shaffer, Independence Township, Diane Palsa, Hopewell Township, and Linda McCoy, Raccoon Township. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #15

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the agreement with Second Life Mac to purchase iPad's which have been removed from circulation at a fee of up to \$85.00 per device, depending on the condition. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #16

By Lori McKittrick, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the request of Walter Gray to purchase parcel 65-001-0903.000 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 by a vote of eight to one. Mrs. Zupsic's response could not be heard on the Zoom call.

Personnel by Matthew Erickson, Chair

MOTION #17

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the employment of Keith Smith, special education paraprofessional at the Senior High School, effective March 22, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #18

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the employment of Heather Lipinski, special education paraprofessional at the Senior High School, effective April 3, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #19

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the payment of winter coaches beyond the regular season. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #20

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Dan Caton, approved the employment of Robert Amrhein, bus driver, effective March 16, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #21

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the employment of James Lindstrom, 2.25 hour server at Hopewell Elementary School, effective March 14, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #22

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Lori McKittrick, approved the employment of Melissa Troy, cafeteria substitute, effective March 20, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #23

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, accepted the resignation of Marilyn Gray, Senior High School paraprofessional, effective March 14, 2023. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #24

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the elimination of the paraprofessional position at the Senior High School previously held by Marilyn Gray. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Other Business

None

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beltz reported that students are preparing for state assessments. He encouraged all students to do their best. He also said that residents are receiving their new property reassessments. He cautioned not to use the District's current millage to calculate what your new taxes may be as millage rates will drop before new assessments take effect for the 2024-2025 school year. Dr. Beltz wished everyone a safe and restful spring break and assured everyone that the administration, teachers and staff all want what is best for children.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Salopek also cautioned residents about the new property reassessments, as there is work to be done with respect to District millage before implementation of the new tax structure.

Unfinished Business

Nothing to report.

Upcoming School Board Meetings

April 18, 2023, Regular Work Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Board Room and Virtual
March 25, 2023, Regular Business Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Board Room and Virtual.

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

Mr. Santia adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Daniel Santia, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary