

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR WORK MEETING  
JUNE 14, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District met in regular session on Monday, June 14, 2021, in the Central Administration Board Room as well as virtually, via Zoom. This meeting was recorded.

An Executive Session was held on June 10, 2021 and 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.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Jeff Winkle, Board President.

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. McKittrick. Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Daniel Caton  
Lesia Dobo  
Matthew Erickson  
Lori McKittrick  
Darren Newberry  
Kathryn Oblak  
Daniel Santia  
Jeffrey Winkle  
Lindsay Zupsic

Also present were: Dr. Michelle Miller, Superintendent; Mr. John Salopek, Solicitor; Jennifer Conrad, Business Administrator; Brooke Baker, incoming Business Administrator; Nancy Barber, Secretary; and visitors.

Kristen Burgess made a special presentation to the Board about the implementation of the Hopewell Education Foundation. The proposed Foundation will be a non-profit, tax-exempt organization which will raise and allocate funds from the community and corporations for the enhancement and enrichment of education. Additional information about the Fund can be found on the District website. Mr. Salopek, solicitor, cautioned Mrs. Burgess about starting a Go-Fund-Me page, as contributions to this site may not be tax deductible.

At this time, Dr. Miller reviewed items that would be voted on later in the meeting.

**Buildings & Grounds:** Darren Newberry, Chair; Daniel Santia, Co-Chair

1. Request of Hopewell Youth Football league to use the Junior High football field to host a skills and development camp June 22, 2021 through June 24, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

2. Hopewell Pool Schedule:
  - a. Group Swim Lessons – June 14-25, 2021 from 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
  - b. Hopewell Area Aqua Club – Beginning June 28 from 8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
  - c. Public Community Swim – June 14 through mid-August from 12:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
3. Request of Joseph Sullivan to use the Junior High School facilities in the event of inclement weather for Hopewell’s Summer Concert series. Concerts are Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.
4. Accept bid for the Junior High boiler project in the amount of \$346,000.00 to Renick Brothers Construction Company, per the scope of work as identified in the District’s Request for Proposal.

Mr. Santia asked if the project included three or six boilers. Dr. Miller answered that six boilers would be replaced. Mrs. Zupsic wanted to know if ESSER Funds would be used for the project. Dr. Miller said yes, ESSER funds would be used. Ms. McKittrick asked if the project included the bypass for the chillers. Dr. Miller said that the project only included the boilers. Ms. McKittrick asked what was the cost for the bypass. Dr. Miller said that two bids that were previously received were for \$14,800.00 and \$19,800.00. Mr. Winkle asked if the project was turnkey. Dr. Miller said, yes.

**Personnel:** Matthew Erickson, Chair; Kathryn Oblak, Co-Chair

1. Resignation for retirement of Linda Hodnicki, cafeteria, effective June 8, 2021.
2. Employment of Joel Roth, Curriculum Director, effective July 1, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances, at a salary of \$98,000.00.

Mr. Winkle said that Mr. Roth had been through quite a few interviews and that he continued to shine throughout.
3. Employment of Louis Ceccarelli, Junior High Assistant Principal, effective July 1, 2021 pending receipt of all clearances, at a salary of \$75,000.00.

Mr. Winkle said that Mr. Ceccarelli had also been through quite an extensive interview process. The District was excited for him to come to Hopewell and looked forward to working with him.
4. Employment of Leona Simunick as a substitute Transportation and Custodial employee, effective June 14, 2021.

5. Employment of the following individuals for grades 7-12 Credit Recovery summer program:
  - a. Michelle deBrucky, Junior High School Supervisor
  - b. Raymon Smith, Senior High School Supervisor, Math instructor
  - c. Michael Gill, General Science and Intro to Scientific Methods, BCIT
  - d. Elizabeth Lehman, Biology
  - e. Bronwyn Korchnak, Chemistry, Substitute On-Site Supervisor
  - f. Dean Nelson, Physics
  - g. Bryan Testa, Social Studies
  - h. Rosetta Dufalla, English
  - i. Jolene Blyzwick, Physical Education
  - j. Jeff Homziak, Substitute on-site supervisor
  
6. Employment of the following individuals on the Summer Custodial Roster, effective June 10, 2021:
  - a. Valerie Alexander
  - b. Alyssa Blose
  - c. Deb Carlini
  - d. Deb Hennessy
  - e. Mallory Heranic
  - f. Deb McMahan
  - g. Leona Simunick
  - h. Jeannie Socci
  - i. Denise Stevens
  - j. Evan Tisch
  - k. Kim Wilfong
  
7. Creation of one kindergarten teaching position at Hopewell Elementary School for the 2021-2022 school year due to increased kindergarten enrollment.
  
8. Rate of pay for summer custodial workers who are permanent employees during the school year to \$12.00 per hour.
  
9. Employment of Edward Deutsch, mechanic, effective July 1, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances.
  
10. Resignation for retirement of Clifton Schreiber, bus driver, effective June 8, 2021.

**Transportation:** Dan Santia, Chair; Dan Caton, Co-Chair

1. Accept bid and purchase/lease five (5) new 72-passenger buses from Wolfington Body Company, Inc. in the amount of \$89,100/each for a total of \$445,500. Delivery will be 150-180 days from receipt of purchase order. Lease payment will come from the Capital Reserve account.

Mr. Frye, Transportation Director, reminded the Board that payments won't start for approximately 11 months. He also said that revenue reimbursement from the state would bring in more than the lease payments. Mr. Winkle asked if they were new or used buses. Mr. Frye confirmed that they were 2023 models. Mrs. Zupsic wanted to confirm delivery some time in October. Mr. Frye confirmed that Wolfington Body Company confirmed delivery.

2. Authorize Business Administrator to seek a 48- or 60-month lease for purchase of five (5) new 72-passenger buses, as listed above, from Wolfington Body Company, Inc.

Mrs. Conrad reported that she had received two quotes for interest rates, 1.9% and 2.2%.

At this time, Dr. Miller began her review of those items that would be voted on at the June 28, 2021 Business meeting.

**Education/Curriculum/Instruction:** Dr. Erickson, Chair; Ms. McKittrick, Co-Chair

1. Confirmation of reconfiguration of the Art Department, effective the 2021-2022 school year.

Dr. Miller said that the District had implemented the new configuration this past year, with one art teacher at every level, elementary, junior high and senior high.

2. Service Agreement with the Children's Institute for the 2021-2022 school year.
3. Renew Agreement with the Stepping Stones Group to provide supplemental school psychologist for the 2021-2022 school year at a rate of \$77.00 per hour.

Mr. Winkle asked how this was different from the contract with Heather Roach. Dr. Miller reported that they were one and the same.

4. Membership renewal with Pennsylvania School Boards Association for the 2021-2022 school year in the amount of \$11,657.04.
5. Membership renewal in the Tri-State Area School Study Council for the 2021-2022 school year in the amount of \$700.00.

6. Renewal of PA-Educator, the District's clearinghouse for professional applications, effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.
7. Nathaniel Bray, a student at Geneva College, to complete his student teaching beginning January 2022, under the supervision of Erin Caputo.
8. Jonathon Dellicarpini, a student at Slippery Rock University, to complete his student teaching in the fall of 2021, under the supervision of Chad McConville.
9. Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Hopewell Area School District and the Hopewell Township Police Department for procedures to be followed when specific incidents happen on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or on any public conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school sponsored activity.
10. Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Hopewell Area School District and the Independence Township Police Department for procedures to be followed when specific incidents happen on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or on any public conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school sponsored activity.
11. Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Hopewell Area School District and the Raccoon Township Police Department for procedures to be followed when specific incidents happen on school property, at any school sponsored activity, or on any public conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school sponsored activity.

Dr. Miller reported that the MOU's were required by the State every two years and are part of the Safe Schools requirements. The MOUs are in place to outline procedures to be followed when specific incidents happen on school property that involve law enforcement.

12. Renewal Agreement with Precision HR to provide substitute paraprofessionals and substitute nurses on an as needed basis for the 2021-2022 school year.
13. PDE Emergency Instructional Time Template that provides flexibility in meeting instructional days/minutes for remote learning if closure of school is needed for 2021-2022 school year.

Dr. Miller reported that the State waived instructional minutes/days requirements during the past school year due to the pandemic. With the uncertainty of the 2021-2022 school year, the State continued to offer the waiver as a safety net for Districts in case closures are necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. This will prevent districts from losing subsidies for lost instructional time.

14. Services Agreement with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for the 2021-2022 school year.
15. The Private Industry Council submitted a grant application to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Region III, to provide summer programming. The tentative schedule is for the weeks of July 12th and July 19th, Monday through Thursday from 9:00am - 1:00pm.

Dr. Erickson asked if students participate in this program from outside the District. Dr. Miller reported that Hopewell students are given preference and students from outside can participate if spots become available.

**Buildings and Grounds:** Mr. Newberry, Chair; Mr. Santia, Co-Chair

1. Request of Lady Viking Basketball Boosters to use the Senior High School student parking lot on October 19, 2021 from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. for a food truck fundraiser.

**Finance:** Ms. McKittrick, Chair; Mrs. Zupsic, Co-Chair

1. Resolution #6-2021 a Resolution providing for adoption of the Final General Fund budget for the 2021-2022 General Fund budget, which projects revenues of \$\_\_\_\_\_ and appropriations of \$\_\_\_\_\_. The difference of \$\_\_\_\_\_ will come from the Fund Balance.
2. Resolution #7-2021, a Resolution levying a tax during the 2021-2022 School Fiscal Year upon real estate within the territorial limits of the School District and fixing the rate thereof at \_\_\_\_\_ mills.
3. Resolution #8-2021, a Resolution requesting the Chief County Assessor to direct the inspection and reassessment of all taxable property within the territorial limits of the School District to which major improvements were made after September 1, 2020, and not included in the tax duplicate certified to the Treasurer of the School District for the School Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022.
4. Resolution #9-2021, a Resolution authorizing rates of discounts and penalties on real estate taxes for the 2021-2022 School Fiscal Year.
5. Resolution #10-2021, a Resolution providing for the installment payment of real estate taxes during the School Fiscal Year 2021-2022.
6. Resolution #11-2021, a Resolution reenacting for the 2021-2022 School Fiscal Year the tax upon transfers of real estate situated within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act.

7. Resolution #12-2021, a Resolution reenacting for the 2022 Calendar Year the tax upon salaries, wages, commissions, compensations, net profits, and other earned income of residents, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act.
8. Resolution #13-2021, a Resolution reenacting for the 2021-2022 School Fiscal Year the tax upon natural persons engaging in an occupation within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act.
9. Resolution #14-2021, a Resolution reenacting for the 2021-2022 School Fiscal Year the mercantile tax upon the gross receipts of wholesale and retail business activity performed or rendered within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act.
10. Resolution #15-2021, a Resolution authorizing the Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion real estate assessment reductions for the Hopewell Area School District's Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021, under the provisions of the Taxpayer Relief Act (Act 1 of 2006).
11. E-Rate Category 1 services for Lit Fiber WAN through Crowncastle for the 2021-2022 school year in the amount of \$4,320.96. This cost represents Hopewell's 50% E-Rate discount of this service.
12. Renew the following insurance coverage through Utica Insurance Company and UPMC (for worker's compensation) for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. This coverage will be provided through the A.J. Gallagher Agency.

Privacy and Network Liability	\$10,831
General Liability/Excess Liability	\$77,748
Automobile	\$27,961
Workers Compensation	\$208,591

13. Approve the request of Boost Living, LLC to purchase parcels 66-213-0148-.001 and 66-213-0148.002 located in Independence Township out of the Beaver County Repository. All delinquent taxes from 2020-2021 tax year and prior years are exonerated.

After Dr. Miller reviewed Finance motions, Mrs. Conrad asked if there were any questions regarding the budget. Ms. McKittrick said that the Finance Committee would meet with Mrs. Conrad later this week to continue to address the budget deficit and look for additional ways to cut costs. Mrs. Zupsic and Mr. Santia asked if ESSER funds could be used in a wider capacity to offset costs. Ms. McKittrick asked if the District had applied for the SRO grant. Mrs. Conrad said yes, however, Dr. Miller corrected her saying that the application has not yet been released by the State. Dr. Miller continues to check on the status and is ready to

complete the application when available. The Grant will not be awarded until sometime early fall.

Mr. Newberry said that the Board, Dr. Miller and Mrs. Conrad continue to make difficult cuts to the budget that he believes will eventually affect student learning. Mr. Newberry asked the Board to consider raising taxes 3 mills, rather than 2, so that the burden of the budget deficit is assumed by taxpayers as well as students.

**Personnel:** Dr. Erickson, Chair; Mrs. Oblak, Co-Chair

1. Memorandum of Understanding regarding the recall of a professional employee.
2. Payment of spring coaches beyond the regular season. (**Attachment**)

**Transportation:** Dan Santia, Chair; Dan Caton, Co-Chair

Recommendation to approve the following:

1. Agreement with Petroleum Traders for the roll-over of fuel from the 2020-2021 school year to the 2021-2022 school year.
2. Authorize the disposition of seven (7) buses listed below at the 422 Auction in July or August, 2021.

**VISITOR'S COMMENTS**

Effective January 1, 2021, community members have the ability to sign up to be recognized during the Visitor's Section of a live Zoom meeting. The individual must also have a device that specifically states his/her name in order to be recognized. Written questions will no longer be accepted. When recognized, the individual will need to state his/her name and address and will have 3 minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board. The time will begin when the individual begins speaking. This time limit will include a possible response by the Board.

A response may be given during the meeting, however, it is also possible that no response be provided during the virtual 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.

Additionally, if a community member wishes to speak during this additional time, the community member must request to speak in the chat box. The Board President will ask for comments in the order in which the community member requested to speak. The individual must have a device that specifically states his/her name in order to be recognized. When recognized, the individual will have 3 minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board. The time will begin when the individual begins speaking. This time limit will include a possible response by the Board. A maximum of thirty minutes total will be reserved during the meeting for community members who request to speak in the chat room.



**Bethany Pistorius, 2008 South Trillium Drive**

Mrs. Pistorius asked about the employment of Leona Simunick. She understood that District policy did not permit someone being hired in to different unions. Dr. Miller replied that that doesn't pertain to substitute employees.

Mrs. Pistorius asked for clarification of the rate of pay for permanent employees working as custodians during the summer. Dr. Miller answered that "permanent" employees are those individuals who are members of other collective bargaining units.

Mrs. Pistorius asked how many bus drivers would the District be short in the fall. Mr. Frye, Director of Transportation, answered five, but it may be as many as 12.

With respect to the reconfiguration of the Art Department, Mrs. Pistorius stated students at the elementary level continue to lose "specials" every day due to teachers being pulled as fill-ins. This was a chronic issue even before the pandemic. Dr. Miller reported that the District has experienced substitute staffing issues in every area during Covid. Currently, she is working with administration on a plan to help reduce the need for fill-ins and for classes not to be cancelled.

At this time, Mr. Winkle returned to Education/Curriculum/Instruction.

**Buildings and Grounds by Darren Newberry, Chair****MOTION #1**

By Darren Newberry, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the request of Hopewell Youth Football league to use the Junior High football field to host a skills and development camp June 22, 2021 through June 24, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously be an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

**MOTION #2**

By Darren Newberry, seconded by Matt Erickson, to approve the Hopewell Pool Schedule. MOTION carried unanimously be an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

- a. Group Swim Lessons – June 14-25, 2021 from 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
- b. HAAC – Beginning June 28 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- c. Public Community Swim – June 14 through mid-August from 12:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

**MOTION #3**

By Darren Newberry, seconded by Lori McKittrick, to approve the request of Joseph Sullivan to use the Junior High School facilities in the event of inclement weather for Hopewell's Summer Concert series. Concerts are Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously be an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #4

By Darren Newberry, seconded by Dan Santia, to accept the bid for the Junior High boiler project in the amount of \$346,000.00 to Renick Brothers Construction Company, per the scope of work as identified in the District's Request for Proposal. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

**Personnel by Dr. Erickson**MOTION #5

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Dan Santia, to accept the resignation for retirement of Linda Hodnicki, cafeteria, effective June 8, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #6

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Lesia Dobo, to approve the employment of Joel Roth, Curriculum Director, effective July 1, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances, at a salary of \$98,000.00. MOTION carried by a vote of eight to one, with Dr. Erickson voting no.

MOTION #7

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Lori McKittrick, to approve employment of Louis Ceccarelli, Junior High Assistant Principal, effective July 1, 2021 pending receipt of all clearances, at a salary of \$75,000.00. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #8

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the employment of Leona Simunick as a substitute Transportation and Custodial employee, effective June 14, 2021. MOTION carried by a vote of eight to one, with Mr. Winkle abstaining.

MOTION #9

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Kathryn Oblak, to approve the employment of the following individuals for grades 7-12 Credit Recovery summer program. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

- a. Michelle deBrucky, Junior High School Supervisor
- b. Raymon Smith, Senior High School Supervisor, Math instructor
- c. Michael Gill, General Science and Intro to Scientific Methods, BCIT
- d. Elizabeth Lehman, Biology
- e. Bronwyn Korchnak, Chemistry, Substitute On-Site Supervisor

- f. Dean Nelson, Physics
- g. Bryan Testa, Social Studies
- h. Rosetta Dufalla, English
- i. Jolene Blyzwick, Physical Education
- j. Jeff Homziak, Substitute on-site supervisor

#### MOTION #10

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the employment of the following individuals for the Summer Custodial Roster, effective June 10, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

- a. Valerie Alexander
- b. Alyssa Blose
- c. Deb Carlini
- d. Deb Hennessy
- e. Mallory Heranic
- f. Deb McMahan
- g. Leona Simunick
- h. Jeannie Socci
- i. Denise Stevens
- j. Evan Tisch
- k. Kim Wilfong

#### MOTION #11

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, to approve the creation of one kindergarten teaching position at Hopewell Elementary School for the 2021-2022 school year due to increased kindergarten enrollment. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

#### MOTION #12

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Dan Santia, to approve the rate of pay for summer custodial workers who are permanent employees during the school year to \$12.00 per hour. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

#### MOTION #13

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Kathryn Oblak, to approve the employment of Edward Deutsch, mechanic, effective July 1, 2021, pending receipt of all clearances. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Matt Erickson, seconded by Darren Newberry, to accept the resignation for retirement of Clifton Schreiber, bus driver, effective June 8, 2021. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

**Transportation by Mr. Santia**

MOTION #15

By Dan Santia, seconded by Darren Newberry, to accept bid and purchase/lease five (5) new 72-passenger buses from Wolfington Body Company, Inc. in the amount of \$89,100/each for a total of \$445,500. Delivery will be 150-180 days from receipt of purchase order. Lease payment will come from the Capital Reserve account. MOTION carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #16

By Dan Santia, seconded by Kathryn Oblak, to authorize Business Administrator to seek a 48- or 60-month lease for purchase of five (5) new 72-passenger buses, as listed above, from Wolfington Body Company, Inc. MOTION carried by a unanimous vote of all Directors in attendance.

Unfinished Business

Mr. Winkle announced that there would be an Executive Session following 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.

Upcoming School Board Meetings

June 28, 2021, Regular Business Meeting will be in person and held virtually.

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

Mr. Winkle adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Jeffrey Winkle, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary