

SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

**HANOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

September 10, 2019

**Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School
Hanover Township, Pennsylvania
September 10, 2019**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Hanover Area School District was held in the Hanover Area Junior/Senior High School on Tuesday, September 10, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mr. John J. Mahle, Jr.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, stated an Executive Session was held prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG

ROLL CALL OF BOARD MEMBERS:

PRESENT: John J. Mahle, Jr, President; Paul Holmgren, Vice-President; Joyce Potsko, Treasurer; Rick Stevens, Secretary; Frank Ciavarella, Jr.; Dr. Vic Kopko, Stacy McGovern Bleich, Kevin Quaglia and Joseph Steininger.

ABSENT: None

Rick Stevens, Secretary, stated a Quorum was established for the meeting.

OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT:

Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, Robert Kachurak, Business Administrator, Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor; and a number of citizens.

September 10, 2019

SWEARING IN OF THE SUPERINTENDENT NATHAN BARRETT

John J. Mahle, Jr., Board President, stated we will now have the swearing in of the Superintendent, Nathan Barrett, by Magistrate Joseph Halesey. It is the privilege of the Hanover Area Board of Education to present to you Mr. Nathan Barrett to be sworn in as our Superintendent by our Magistrate Joseph Halesey. Assisting in the ceremony is Nathan's wife, Megan; daughter, Julia, and sons Nathan Jr., Nicholas and Jack. Following the ceremony, Mr. Barrett would like to offer a few remarks. Thank you.

Mr. Nathan Barrett was sworn in as Superintendent of the Hanover Area School District.

APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES/REPORTS:

It was moved by Paul Holmgren and seconded by Frank Ciavarella: To approve the following minutes and accept the following reports:

- Regular School Board Meeting minutes of August 6, 2019
- Special School Board Meeting minutes of August 15, 2019
- Luzerne Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Regular Meeting minutes of June 19, 2019
- Wilkes-Barre Area Career & Technical Center Board of Education-Joint Operating Committee minutes of August 5, 2019

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia, Steininger, Stevens. NO: None ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: None
Chair declared the motion carried.

September 10, 2019

John J. Mahle, Board President, asked if there was any public input on Board Agenda actions; items only.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, asked if there was any Board input on agenda items only.

There was no public input or Board input.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, stated he would like to honor the following:

2018-2019 Retirees

<i>Deborah Yatko</i>	<i>Special Education Teacher</i>
<i>Robert Hess</i>	<i>Maintenance Worker</i>
<i>Donald Kane</i>	<i>Maintenance Worker</i>
<i>Robert Woolfolk</i>	<i>Maintenance Worker</i>

2018-2019 Excellence in Teaching Recipients

<i>Tracy Toole</i>	<i>Elementary</i>
<i>Michael Griffith</i>	<i>Secondary</i>

Mr. Barrett, Superintendent, stated my final agenda item of my report is at the direction of our Board of Education; we will be making revisions to our Hanover Area School District dress code, and that will be forming a committee within the next several weeks and we will be reporting back to this on October 1st. That is all I have for you this evening.

It was moved by Frank Ciavarella, seconded by Stacy Bleich: To accept the Report of the Superintendent.

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia, Steininger, Stevens. NO: None ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: None
Chair declared the motion carried.

September 10, 2019

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GENERAL:

It was moved by Rick Stevens, seconded by Joyce Potsko: To approve the following motions:

1. Approve the second and final reading of the following Board Policies:
 - #006 Meetings
 - #103 Nondiscrimination/Discriminatory Harassment-School & Classroom
 - #103.1 Nondiscrimination-Qualified Students w/Disabilities
 - #104 Nondiscrimination/Discriminatory Harassment –Employment Practices
 - #108 Adoption of Textbooks
 - #220 Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials
 - #222 Tobacco/Nicotine-Pupils
 - #247 Hazing
 - #249 Bullying/Cyberbullying
 - #311 Reduction of Staff
 - #323 Tobacco/Nicotine-Employees
 - #626 Procurement-Federal Programs-Attachment
 - #704 Maintenance
 - #707 Use of School Facilities
 - #806 Child Abuse
 - #808 Food Services
 - #904 Public Attendance at School Events

2. Approve the Agreement between the Hanover Area School District and Churnetski Transportation to provide transportation services for the SHINE Program at Wilkes University for the 2019-2020 School Year. There is no cost to the school district. (Exhibit G-2)

Special Education Department

3. Approve the Agreement between the Hanover Area School District and First Hospital Wyoming Valley for a period August 1, 2019 to August 1, 2020. (Exhibit G-3)

September 10, 2019

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #3 ABOVE): YES:
Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia, Steininger, Stevens.
NO: None ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: None Chair declared the motions carried.

FINANCIAL:

It was moved by Frank Ciavarella, seconded by Rick Stevens: To approve the following motions:

1. Ratify the following PNC check registers: (Exhibit F-1)

August 2, 2019 to September 4, 2019

2. Approve the PNC check register of: (Exhibit F-2)

September 5, 2019

3. Approve the following Treasurer reports: (Exhibit F-3)
July 31, 2019 for the General Fund, Payroll and Capital Projects

4. Elliott Greenleaf & Dean \$3,400.95
July 2019
Invoice #151939

September 10, 2019

5. Pugliese, Finnegan, Shaffer and Ferrentino \$3,997.50
August
Invoice #265467

6. Approve the request of Mark and Regina Kay, Hanover Township, to pay the discount amount for the 2018-2019 school tax. (Exhibit F-6)

7. Ratify the payment to OKDI, Inc., in the amount of \$4,000 for the Life-Threat Assessment for each school building. This payment was made out of the Capital Project Funds.

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING #7 ABOVE): YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko (No on Motion #2, yes on everything else), Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia, Steininger, Stevens. NO: Kopko (on Motion #2 only) ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: None Chair declared the motions carried.

PERSONNEL:

It was moved by Stacy Bleich, seconded by Dr. Vic Kopko: To approve the following motions:

1. Accept the resignation of Patricia Brennan, Cleaner Position #1 at Memorial Elementary, effective August 16, 2019. (Exhibit P-1)

September 10, 2019

2. Appoint the following Security Officers for Special Occasions at the Hanover Area School District for the 2019-2020 School Year at a rate of \$9.00/hour:

Brady Belles
John Jablowski

Bernard Gurnari
Christopher Marhold

3. Approve an FMLA Leave for Employee #30934.

4. Approve Tenure for the following Professional Employees:

Jillian Carlo Bytheway
Kaitlyn Cibello
Alexandra Halesey
Colin Hatten
Rebekah Saylor
Alayna Soucy
Aimee Weaver

5. Approve the following recipients of the 2018-2019 Excellence in Teaching Elementary and Secondary \$250 Mini-Grant Awards:

Tracy Toole
Michael Griffith

Elementary
Secondary

6. Approve the request of Amy Mullery, Secondary Guidance Counselor, to take October 2nd and October 3, 2019 off as UNPAID Days, with the understanding that this will not set a precedent or establish a past practice. (Exhibit P-6)

September 10, 2019

7. Approve the Resolution, adopted by the Hanover Area Board of Education, to identify and authorize, Nathan Barrett, Superintendent, to use electronic signatures for contracts with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. (Exhibit P-7)

8. Approve the request of the Hanover Area Youth Wrestling to use the cafeteria, gymnasium and wrestling room at the Junior-Senior High School for a tournament on November 22nd and November 23, 2019. (Exhibit P-8)

9. Approve the request of Christa Langdon, Leo Club Advisor, to take approximately 50 students to New York City in December, 2019. No expense to the district. (Exhibit P-9)

10. Appoint/re-appoint as per Exhibit P-10, the list of Co-Curricular Personnel and Department Chairpersons, for the 2019-2020 School Year.

11. Appoint/re-appoint the following Extra-Curricular Personnel, for the 2019-2020 School Year:

Kenneth Warman Asst. Co-ed Junior High Soccer \$1,614.00

12. Approve Resolution P-12 authorizing the proper officers of the Board of School Directors of the Hanover Area School District to request approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to re-open the Lyndwood Elementary School.

September 10, 2019

13. Appoint Kayleen Beecham as Instructional Assistant as per the HAESPA contract, effective September 11, 2019.

BOARD VOTE: (ON MOTIONS #1 TO AND INCLUDING # 13 ABOVE): YES: Bleich, Ciavarella (I abstain on Motion #9; my daughter is a member of the Leo Club, and I vote yes on all the other motions), Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia (Yes on all motions except #10; I abstain on motion #10), Steininger, Stevens. **NO:** None **ABSENT:** None **ABSTAIN:** Ciavarella (On Motion #9 only; my daughter is a member of the Leo Club), Quaglia (On Motion #10 only) **Chair declared the motions carried.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Vic Kopko, Board Member, said he would like to make a statement, if he may:

Ladies and gentlemen, there have been much discussions about property tax and property tax increases throughout the state of Pennsylvania, and obviously here at Hanover Area School District. Property taxes must be eliminated by the Pennsylvania General Assembly for residential taxpayers immediately. We see crisis situations throughout the state. The state has passed their burdens onto all Pennsylvania School Boards, including and especially Hanover Area. There are a couple of reasons why School Boards, especially Hanover Area, are looking at budget deficits. The state mandates certain expenditures but did not keep up with funding and passing that deficit onto local school districts, including Hanover Area; their own unfunded liability, particularly in their pension system. The state mandates a 35% pension contribution on all salaries in the school districts to the Pennsylvania School Employees and State Employees Retirement System. The state pension system is underfunded by at least \$75 billion dollars. The state budget itself has spending of \$35 billion dollars, that is over two times the amount of the state budget. Unfunded pension obligations are increasingly burdening school districts. Most private companies contribute approximately 3% to 6% of salaries. There are particular examples along the lines of why the state needs to either increase funding or remove and eliminate property taxes. Hanover Area spends approximately \$6 million dollars on special education, yet the state funding

September 10, 2019

that we receive is only \$1.5 million dollars. Each year there is an incremental gap between the amount that we are spending, as most school districts are, and funding from the state. Health care costs continue to grow in amount at Hanover Area and we are taking steps obviously to cost save wherever we can. The pension contribution mandate at 35% is breaking taxpayers and burdening school districts with very very difficult decisions because of the unfunded pension liability. Taxpayers can't withstand any more increases as mandated by the state. School Boards are the ones who have to make the difficult decisions and increase property taxes where applicable or cut education across the board. We know people are losing their homes and some are making decisions between food, medications and property taxes. Hard working individuals throughout their life scrapped up enough money for the American dream, only to see it nearly wiped out. Property taxes must be eliminated at the state level to help the education process in the state of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania does not have to reinvent the wheel; there are other states who have no property taxes for retirees and other means of funding school districts. It is absolutely imperative that the state move on the process of eliminating property taxes for residential individuals and increase funding for school districts. Thank you Mr. President.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Carrie Ann Waitzer stated she heard his comment now she wants to know what are you doing with our tax money. She said she can't sell her home, nobody wants it; her sister had hers on the market and she had to pull it because nobody would buy it. She went on to say that she was a senior citizen and a widow, and her taxes went up \$68.00; and asked where is she getting it. She said she cannot fund her medication, it's hard to buy food, it's hard to pay her mortgage, and it's hard to pay taxes. She went on to say she has to pay her medicare and another insurance to cover her medications, to cover her medicare, and asked where do you think she is getting this money. She said if she has to pay for her insurance, why can't these teachers pay for theirs; take it out of their pockets like she has to.

September 10, 2019

She said her husband is deceased so she has no other money coming in. She wanted to know what the teachers are doing to pay for their own insurances and what you are doing with her money.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, replied what we are doing with the taxes that we raised in the Hanover Area School District is paying approximately 67% of our budget towards salaries and benefits; those are contractual. We also, as you heard, pay approximately \$6 million dollars which is mandated towards special education. Every child is entitled to an education and we are obligated to provide it, but it is very expensive. We are happy to do it but unfortunately the way school districts are funded these days, as Dr. Kopko pointed it out, is through real estate property taxes. We are not like a business where we can raise the prices of a can of soup. Our revenue generator is only through property taxes. That is just the fact of the matter, there is nothing we can do to change that; we would like to change it. Every school district that I am involved in would like to change it. The teachers for the first time are contributing towards their health care under the latest contract. While it's a small percentage through the collective bargaining; it's more than they paid before. So we are very pleased with that and the teachers are very cooperative working with us, passing the collective bargaining agreement for the first time to have a contribution towards health care. Two years already I am here, and when I came in that is when we had to take out a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) which was a heavy interest burden on the taxpayers, just to get through the year, that was for \$6.5 million with some aggressive refinancing; thus sending the taxpayers that interest payment. Unfortunately due to a glitch in the county, we had to take out a short Tax Anticipation Note this year, through no fault of this district, but I think this district has turned a corner and until the property tax structure is changed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, unfortunately, it only places the school districts to raise the money in their taxes.

She said so you have the right without asking us to go ahead and raise our taxes without coming to the taxpayers; so another words you are holding us hostage. She also said you never came to her and asked her is it ok if I raise your taxes.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, replied we are not holding you hostage and we do not have to go to the taxpayers; we are limited under Act 1 to how much we can raise taxes by; and we do come to the public every month and present what we spend. These guys do answer to you every two years when they run for office, that is the nature of a representative form of government. These gentlemen were elected to make these tough decisions; not necessarily decisions that they like.

September 10, 2019

She replied so another words you are holding us hostage and you are holding our children, just like the judges did.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, stated I don't think that is a fair statement but you are entitled to your opinion. You are hostage to the tax scheme of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

She stated then you buy her house and her sister's house, and we won't have to worry about selling them and getting out underneath them. She stated we are hostages; we can't sell them.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, stated you should contact your local legislature and have them change the property tax. We are not the ones who enacted the tax scheme, they are: it is the Pennsylvania legislature and we can't change it.

She said then don't raise our taxes, saying the teachers aren't teaching the kids, they are coming out stupid; look at the school records, they are low. She then stated we are paying taxes for what.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, replied I don't think you should make comments attacking the teachers. I think that is inappropriate. He said you are paying taxes to educate the children.

Dr. Vic Kopko, Board Member, replied that is why we brought Mr. Barrett in; because of his affiliation with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

She said but he is not from Hanover.

Dr. Vic Kopko, Board Member, replied and that is exactly why we brought him in. That is exactly why; because he was asked by the governor to work on basic education curriculum for the entire state.

She replied but he doesn't live in Hanover and why doesn't the teachers have to live in Hanover.

Attorney Jack Dean, School Solicitor, stated there are some constitutional issues over that. That is the federal government that states we cannot discriminate anyone based on where they live; it's a federal constitution.

She then asked would she have to pay her school taxes to someone else if her kid went to another school.

September 10, 2019

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Paul Holmgren, seconded by Kevin Quaglia: To adjourn the Regular School Board Meeting at 7:28 P.M.

BOARD VOTE: YES: Bleich, Ciavarella, Holmgren, Kopko, Mahle, Potsko, Quaglia, Steininger, Stevens. NO: None ABSENT: None ABSTAIN: None
Chair declared the motion carried.

ATTEST: _____, Secretary

Rick Stevens
Hanover Area School Board