

**SOUTH MIDDLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**4 Academy Street, Boiling Springs, PA 17007**

**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 6, 2020**

The South Middleton Board of School Directors met via Zoom (virtual meeting) on April 6, 2020. The President, Mrs. Knouse, called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Secretary called the roll with all members present except as designated:

**School Directors**

Mr. John Greenbaum

Mr. William Hartman

Mrs. Stacey Knavel

Mrs. Elizabeth Knouse

Mrs. Elizabeth Meikrantz

Mrs. Denise MacIvor

Mrs. Edith Rob

Mrs. Bethanne Sellers

Mr. Jonathan Still

**Administrative Staff**

Dr. Matthew Strine - Superintendent

Melanie Shaver-Durham – Director of Curriculum/Instruction

Dr. Jesse White – Principal - YBMS

Kimberly Spisak – Director of Student Services

Nicole Weber – Director of Business/Operations

**Student Representatives**

Gibran Varahrami - Absent

Eric Gessaman

**Visitors**

**Board Secretary**

Nicole Weber

**Solicitor**

Gareth Pahowka

## **INTRODUCTIONS AND RECOGNITION**

Mrs. Knouse asked for a moment of silence for those that have lost their lives to the COVID-19 virus both here in the United States and across the world.

Mrs. Knouse reviewed a few logistics of the meeting, since this is only the second meeting that the Board has held via Zoom. She commented that the meeting might appear to run slower than usual because all votes will be roll call votes. She also thanked the administration and professional staff for their hard work in preparing to teach students remotely. Since this is a new endeavor, all of us will have to work together as a team and to be gracious and flexible as this new way of learning is rolled out. She also commented that the Bubbler community misses the students and thanks them for their flexibility during this unprecedented time. She commented that the Board is very proud of the administration and faculty for their willingness to work and to learning this new way of teaching and working hard to make it a success. She also thanked Dr. White for assisting with the Board meeting this evening by managing Zoom so that all can run smoothly.

Mrs. Knouse also welcomed Dr. Strine back from his leave of absence and asked him to comment.

Dr. Strine commented that he wanted to thank a number of people that filled in and helped to run the District during his absence. He particularly wanted to thank Melanie Shaver-Durham, Kimberly Spisak, and Nicole Weber for their leadership during his absence. He also wanted to thank Dr. Jesse White for filling in as Substitute Superintendent during this time. He also wanted to thank the technology staff for their dedication and hard work during the pandemic. They have worked hard to make sure that all technology needs are met, and the district is equipped to assist teachers and students in the remote learning process. He is looking forward to getting back to leading the District.

Dr. Strine also commented on the South Middleton School District faculty and staff. They have been working hard to prepare to teach students in a different way due to the pandemic. The administrative team and teachers have stepped up, and he thanked them for their grace and attitude towards preparing to teach remotely. He knows they all want the best for their students. He asked for grace, patience, and flexibility during this time as teachers deliver lessons in a very different way to students.

## **CITIZENS PARTICIPATION**

Mrs. Knouse announced that members of the public that are participating in the meeting can email comments during the meeting to: [smsdschoolboardcomment@smsd.us](mailto:smsdschoolboardcomment@smsd.us). Comments will be addressed during the second citizens participation at the end of the meeting.

## **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robb, that the Board approves the minutes of the following meeting:

-Regular Board Meeting – 3/23/20

**On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, that the Board approves the following financials:

The Board approved payment of General Fund bills represented by checks 59797 to checks 59893 in the amount of \$845,367.98.

The Board approved payment of Activity Fund bills represented by checks 16279 in the amount of \$423.96.

The Board approved payment of Athletic Fund bills represented by check 22039 in the amount of \$568.85 as represented in the attached summary.

The Board approved payment of Cafeteria Fund bills represented by check 7172 in the amount of \$80,417.19 as represented in the attached summary.

No checks disbursed from Capital Reserve (PSDLAF) Fund bills during this time period.

No checks disbursed from Trust Fund bills during this time period.

**On a roll call vote, the motion passed as follows:**

**Mr. John Greenbaum - Yes  
Mr. William Hartman - Yes  
Mrs. Stacey Knavel - Yes  
Mrs. Elizabeth Knouse - Yes  
Mrs. Elizabeth Meikrantz – Yes**

**Mrs. Denise MacIvor - No  
Mrs. Edith Rob - Yes  
Mrs. Bethanne Sellers - Yes  
Mr. Jonathan Still - Yes**

**8 – Yes, 1 – No, 0 – Abstentions, 0 – Absent**

**REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION,  
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS/OPERATIONS AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Dr. Strine commented on the upcoming remote learning and asked that the South Middleton School District community lead with patience and grace. Things might not go perfectly or as planned when remote learning is instituted, but efforts will be made to problem-solve. We are in this together.

Melanie Shaver-Durham reported that from March 18 through April 3, 2020, the teachers have been providing students with enrichment activities and review of lessons already learned. However, administration and staff are working to roll out a remote learning plan after the spring break for all students. Laptops have been distributed, work is ongoing to make sure that all families have access to devices and the internet for the remote learning plan. Staff is receiving professional development training on the plan and preparing to implement the remote learning plan on April 15, 2020. Information for families will be provided on April 8, 2020, regarding the formal remote learning plan. The administration and staff have worked hard as a team to have the plan work successfully.

Mr. Hartman raised a question about the possibility of having a second device provided to families that may have needed one, but did not want to request one. Mrs. Shaver-Durham requested that if families have concerns about not having enough devices, to please reach out to the building principal to assist.

Mrs. Knavel commented about the SMSD community having grace and patience with each other. This is a totally new way of teaching and learning. It may take time to resolve issues – try to be flexible and accommodating during this time.

Mrs. Sellers inquired about families needing help with technology. There will be a family technology help desk.

Nicole Weber, Director of Business and Operations, reported that the business office is continuing to pay bills, receive revenue, and processing payroll. Many of these tasks are being completed remotely, but staff does come into the office periodically to print checks, etc. Act 13 of 2020 requires that SMSD employees to receive their normal pay (not more or less) during the time that schools are closed. For the hourly employees, their pay was averaged over the past 3 months to determine their normal pay.

The Earned Income Tax collections will trend downward, due to the pandemic and will affect revenues for the 2019-2020 school year. Mrs. Weber plans to attend webinars that will review budget predictions for the 2020-2021 year, and the impact on state and school budgets due to COVID-19.

Transportation is already working on establishing routes for next year. Human resources have been reviewing the Coronavirus Relief Act and Act 13 of 2020. Also working on getting payroll and FMLA forms onto our website for staff usage.

Mr. Hartman inquired about security with business staff working from home. All employees have been issued a district laptop and have access to the network – all security is in place for this.

Mrs. Kimberly Spisak, Director of Student Services, reviewed the plans being developed to assist our special education/gifted students for remote learning and making sure that needs are met.

She also updated the Board on the meal delivery for students in need. Meals pick-ups are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but meals are provided for 5 days of the week. The Chartwells food service staff and Jennifer Metz have been working hard to make these pick-ups happen. Mrs. Spisak is appreciative of their efforts to assist in this capacity. Pizza coupons have been provided by Annile's for families to use to pick up food at the restaurant.

Eric Gessaman, Student Representative to the Board, commented on concerns that students have about the scheduling of prom, MiniThon, and graduation plans. Dr. Strine commented that the administrative staff is aware of the concerns and working on alternate plans if these events are unable to occur.

## **NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS - None**

## **TOPIC DISCUSSION**

Mr. Brad Remig of Public Financial Management (PFM), presented information for the Board on the possibility of a bond refinancing in order to garner savings. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, that the Board approves the agenda of Monday, April 6, 2020, with all corrections as presented. **On a roll all vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**Adjustment/Revision of the 2019-2020 School Calendar**

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Still, that the Board authorizes the Superintendent to adjust/revise the 2019-2020 instructional school calendar, without prior Board approval for the remainder of the year.

Dr. Strine commented that Governor Wolfe waived the 180 day requirement for the 2019-2020 school year due to the pandemic. Dr. Strine would just like some flexibility with adjusting the calendar, if needed. There is no intent to extend or adjust the end of school year.

**On a roll call vote, the motion passed as follows:**

**Mr. John Greenbaum - Yes**

**Mr. William Hartman - Yes**

**Mrs. Stacey Knavel - No**

**Mrs. Elizabeth Knouse - Yes**

**Mrs. Elizabeth Meikrantz – Yes**

**Mrs. Denise MacIvor - Yes**

**Mrs. Edith Rob - Yes**

**Mrs. Bethanne Sellers - No**

**Mr. Jonathan Still - Yes**

**7 – Yes, 2 – No, 0 – Abstentions, 0 – Absent**

**Direct Energy Agreement**

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, that the Board approves the Commodity Master Agreement between South Middleton School District and Direct Energy Business. **On a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**PLANNING/DISCUSSION: Regular Board Meeting: 4/20/20**

The following topics were discussed as possible agenda items for the 4/20/20 regular board meeting:

**a. Lunch Prices for 2020-2021**

That the Board approves the 2020-2021 school lunch prices:

Breakfast (all sites) \$2.00

Elementary Lunch (Rice/IFES) \$2.95

Secondary Lunch (YBMS/BSHS) \$3.05

Adult Breakfast \$2.85

Adult Lunch \$4.00

**b. Contract with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to Provide Telephone Services**

That the Board approves the agreement between South Middleton School District and the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) to provide telephone services and support for the South Middleton School District via Integraone - Fortivoice.

**c. Transportation Contract - Rohrer Bus Services**

That the Board approves the transportation contract between South Middleton School District and Rohrer Bus Services. Mrs. Rob questioned whether this contract was technically the lowest quote. It was not; however, the two proposals were quoted very differently, making a comparison between the two proposals difficult.

**d. Personnel - Professional - Childrearing Leave Request Extension**

That the Board approves the request of Brenna Larkin, Kindergarten teacher at W.G. Rice Elementary School, to extend her childrearing leave. The original approval had a scheduled return of 6/1/20. Request to extend the childrearing leave to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

**e. Personnel - Continuation of Long-Term Substitute**

That the Board approves the continuation of employment of Hannah Huss, long-term substitute for Brenna Larkin, until the end of the 2019-2020 school year. (originally approved in November 2019).

**f. Personnel - Technology Intern- Job Description**

That the Board approves the job description for the technology intern position.

**CITIZENS PARTICIPATION**

There were two emails received from the public regarding the April 20, 2020, board agenda. They are listed below, and questions were addressed during the meeting.

Carol Yanity

I understand that administration has requested the ability to change the district calendar without the school board approval. Is this correct? If correct, why would the administration want the ability to make this change? The Governor and state legislature have waived the 180 day requirement for staff and students due to the closing of schools.

Chris Morgan

I was looking on the agenda for tonight's meeting and as of 4:30 P.M. today did not see an attachment for the new bus contract with Rohrer. Do we know when that will be available for public viewing? I also wanted to know if the new contract will include cameras and WIFI on the buses. Behavioral issues on the buses is an area of concern. We need to make sure that we are doing everything we can to assist our drivers. These two items were discussed by the previous board for inclusion in the new contract.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Cumberland-Perry AVTS – Mr. Greenbaum**

No Report

**PSBA Legislative Representative – Mr. Still**

Mr. Still commented on Act 13 of 2020, regarding the pandemic. There seems to be a belief that since schools are closed, there will be a lot of savings for districts across the State. This is not the case. Suggestion made by Mr. Berk that perhaps need to meet with representatives to update state representatives on the needs of districts.

**South Middleton Township Liaison – Mrs. Knouse**

No Report

**Capital Area Intermediate Unit #15 – Mrs. Knouse**

No Report

**Bubbler Foundation – Mrs. Meikrantz**

Mrs. Meikrantz commented that the annual dinner has been cancelled. She also thanked Mr. Brett Sheaffer for his service on the foundation as a teacher representative.

**South Middleton Parks & Recreation – Mr. Greenbaum**

No Report

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Board Calendar**

-April 14, 2020 - Budget Workshop - 7:00 PM

-April 20, 2020 - Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 PM

**FYI - FMLA Leave (Family Medical Leave Act)**

Allison Schrom - FMLA From: approximately 4/27/20 through 6/8/20

**DIRECTORS' DISCUSSION**

All of the Board members expressed their appreciation to the South Middleton School District administrators and teachers for their excellent work, dedication, and commitment to the students and families of the community. They know it has been a challenging time and problems will be encountered as students and teachers work together within the remote learning environment. The Board requested that everyone be flexible and have patience with each other during this time.

Mrs. MacIvor spoke about the Bocce program and had the opportunity to see the students compete, prior to the pandemic. Kudos to all that participate in the program. Mrs. Rob mentioned that PDE has free online courses posted on its website. Were they reviewed?

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Sellers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Nicole Weber  
Board Secretary