

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

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
May 3, 2021

The South Middleton Board of School Directors met on May 3, 2021. The South Middleton Board of School Directors met in the BSHS Auditorium. Mrs. Knouse called the meeting to order at 7:00 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. Denise MacIvor

Mrs. Elizabeth Meikrantz
Mrs. Edith Rob
Mrs. Bethanne Sellers
Mr. Jonathan Still

Administrative Staff

Dr. Matthew Strine, Superintendent
Mrs. Nicole Weber, Directors of Business/Operations
Mrs. Melanie Shaver-Durham, Director of Curriculum/Instruction
Mr. Alex Smith, Director of Student Services
Dr. Jesse White, Principal- Yellow Breeches Middle School
Mr. David Boley, Principal- W.G. Rice Elementary School
Mrs. Jessica White, Supervisor of Special Education
Mr. Zachary Gump, Supervisor of Building/Grounds

Student Representatives

Gibran Varahrami
Ajla Salkic

Visitors

See Attached

Board Secretary

Cristeen Beck

Solicitor

Gareth Pahowka

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, that the Board approves the minutes of the following meeting: 4/19/21 – Regular Board Meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, to approve the agenda of May 3, 2021, with all corrections as indicated.

The motion passed unanimously.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS –

Dr. Strine announced today begins Teacher Appreciation Week. Thanked teachers for all of they have done and continue to do.

Thanked technology department for improving microphones for Board meeting.

Winter Sports Presentation – Girls Varsity Basketball, Winter Cheerleading, Junior High Winter Cheerleading, Girls Junior High Basketball, Boys Junior High Varsity Basketball, Boys Junior High JV Basketball, Junior High Wrestling, Varsity Wrestling, Boys JV Basketball, Boys Varsity Basketball, Boys Varsity Swimming, Girls Varsity Swimming, Bocce. Highlighted improvements in athletic facilities.

Mr. Hartman inquired about timeline for updating display board of athletes.

Dr. Strine responded that he would ensure that information is updated.

Mrs. Knouse commented on positive side of livestreaming and allows people far away to watch events.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY) - None

PRESIDENT’S REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS/STUDENT REPORTS

Mrs. Knouse thanked technology team, Cristeen, Barb Kuhns, Kim Ronan, and Zach for their set up for meeting.

Advisory Committee Reports

Cumberland Perry AVTS – Mr. Greenbaum – Held meeting last Monday, was unable to attend meeting due to Budget Committee meeting.

PSBA Legislative Report – Mr. Still – Shared update of recent Senate Bill 381 that affects substitute student teachers.

South Middleton Township- Mrs. MacIvor – Highlighted recent grant funding for walking trail project. Noted planned upgrades at Spring Meadows Park- playground and adult fitness facility.

Mrs. Rob inquired about rail trail.

Mrs. MacIvor responded she did not receive an update on that.

South Middleton Parks and Recreation- Mr. Greenbaum – Highlighted recent meeting and upcoming changes to Spring Meadows.

Bubbler Foundation- Mrs. Meikrantz – Bubbler Foundation was not able to host their annual dinner which is a fundraiser. Noted that donations can be made via website.

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS

Mrs. Nicole Weber- Director of Business/Operations thanked football team and custodial/maintenance staff for their work in helping to move furniture back into classrooms for re-opening. Thanked several district staff- Sharon Giselman, Julie Slaybaugh, Diane Clugh, Stephanie Jaymes, Kathy Ryan, and Jen Metz for their work in creating a report for the state to provide temporary nutrition benefits for families in need. Mrs. Weber shared information about district's AA bond rating which will be beneficial in refinancing 2016 bond.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ajla Salkic- Student Representative, shared that she will be fully vaccinated this week. Encouraged everyone who can get vaccinated to do so. Due to no Bocce season, held Bocce tournament instead on April 24 with Perfect Peers Inclusion Club. AP testing through College Board has begun. Highlighted upcoming Junior/Senior Prom event. Students will be voting this week for king and queen. Thanked Board for their time.

Gibran Varahrami- Student Representative, shared update on Mini-Thon which will be held next Monday night. Highlighted student Carson Kauffman who is BSHS Zone Smart's "Employee of the Month". Thanked administration for having in-person Board meetings. Commented on recent experience at last meeting with community's comments on diversity/inclusivity and that everyone should work together.

SUPPORT SERVICES REPORTS

Dr. Strine noted that Mr. Hain was not able to attend in person tonight but shared his notes for the meeting. Lunches have been going well, continuing mask enforcement, and working with students to improve grades. Highlighted upcoming events including Mini-Thon, Senior Night, and Baccalaureate. Graduation will be held at 7:00 pm on June 10 on Eckert Field with social distancing.

Dr. Jesse White, Principal YBMS – thanked football players for their work in moving furniture back into the buildings. Shared update on lunches, hallway transitions, and mask enforcement. Dr. White highlighted upcoming end of year activities at YBMS- ice cream sandwiches, t-shirts, and afternoon “fun day”. Thanked staff and teachers at YBMS.

Mrs. Knouse asked about the colorful sidewalks outside YBMS.

Mrs. Meikrantz commented with her appreciation for thinking outside the box to assist in making events happen for students.

Mrs. Rob commented that she attended a wonderful band concert on Sunday. Thanked Mr. Yinger and his staff.

Mr. Boley thanked SMSD PTO for their work on decorating the sidewalks for Teacher Appreciation Week.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Strine shared update on continued work on Comprehensive Plan. Second meeting for Comprehensive Plan Committee is May 11. Staff and parents were all surveyed as part of the Comprehensive Planning process.

Dr. Strine shared statement of intent that the 2021-2022 school year will begin on Wednesday August 25, 2021 for 5 days a week in person for all students and will continue to monitor Department of Health and PA Department of Education guidelines.

Dr. Strine noted that diversity and inclusivity work is on pause but will start planning for new process.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Knavel, to approve the consent agenda.

Financial Reports Personnel- Classified- Retirement Board Treasurer 2021-2022

Mrs. Knouse highlighted Mrs. Trostle's retirement.

The motion passed unanimously.

Itemized Agenda:

Bond Refinancing

Approving funding for the Current Refunding Project: A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing incurring nonelectoral debt evidenced by one or more series of General Obligation Bonds in the maximum principal amount \$11,700,000 to provide funds to currently refund the District's General Obligation Bonds, Series A of 2016 and pay costs of issuance in accordance with the Resolution presented this evening. (Option 1 - annual savings throughout the repayment of the bond.)

OR

Approving funding for the Capital Project and Current Refunding Projects: A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing incurring nonelectoral debt evidenced by one or more series of General Obligation Bonds in the maximum principal amount \$11,700,000 to provide funds to pay for a capital project, currently refund the District's General Obligation Bonds, Series A of 2016 and pay costs of issuance in accordance with the Resolution presented this evening. (Option 2 – savings up front at one time.)

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Knavel, to approve the Bond Resolution Option 1 (annual savings throughout the repayment of the bond).

Mrs. Knouse announced that Mr. Steve Hovis is present to answer any questions.

Mrs. Knavel asked Mrs. Weber for her recommendation.

Mrs. Weber responded that she recommends option 2 with the savings up front for capital reserve increases. If option 1 is selected, suggested moving those funds annually to that account.

Mrs. MacIvor inquired about impact of choice on balance sheet and debt ratios.

Mr. Hovis responded with information about amount cap and district's position.

Mrs. MacIvor inquired about rating agency.

Mr. Hovis responded with explanation of bond rating.

Mr. Still inquired about net savings and allocation.

Mrs. Weber responded with recommendation with net savings going to capital upgrades.

Mrs. Knavel commented about final numbers once bond option is selected.

Mrs. Rob inquired about option 2 and cost of the up-front savings.
Mr. Hovis responded with information about additional bond principal.
Mrs. Rob clarified that if option 2 is selected as recommended, it will cost \$200,000 to save \$700,000 over life of the loan.
Mrs. Weber noted that it allows district to lock in current day rates. Verified Mrs. Rob's assessment of numbers.
Mrs. Rob inquired about how much money that would affect over next 5 years.
Mrs. Weber responded with recommendation for use of funds for capital upgrades.
Mr. Still affirmed understanding of savings.
Mrs. Maclvor asked Mrs. Weber about annual transfer to replenish capital reserve.
Mrs. Weber confirmed that there is an annual transfer from general fund.
Mrs. Maclvor commented that there may be other options to regularly replenish fund.
Mr. Still inquired about line item.
Mrs. Weber responded with budget line item information. Confirmed Mrs. Maclvor's information about currently budgeted amount.
Mrs. Knavel commented that both are good options, agrees with administration.
Mr. Hartman asked Mrs. Weber for her recommendation.
Mrs. Weber responded that she recommends option 2.
Mr. Hovis clarified bond resolution and restructuring of current debt.

On a roll call vote, the motion was defeated as follows:

Mrs. Rob- No	Mrs. Knavel – No
Mrs. Sellers- No	Mrs. Knouse- No
Mr. Still – No	Mrs. Maclvor- Yes
Mr. Greenbaum- No	Mrs. Meikrantz – No
Mr. Hartman- No	

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

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Knavel, to approve the Bond Resolution Option 2 (savings up front at one time).

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

Mrs. Rob- Yes	Mrs. Knavel – Yes
Mrs. Sellers- Yes	Mrs. Knouse- Yes
Mr. Still – Yes	Mrs. Maclvor- No
Mr. Greenbaum- Yes	Mrs. Meikrantz- Yes
Mr. Hartman- Yes	

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

Mr. Greenbaum thanked Mrs. Weber for her work on the bond refinancing.
Mrs. Rob noted she appreciates the Board's discussion on this topic.

Asbestos-Containing Materials Removal Project

Mr. Greenbaum made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Meikrantz, to approve and authorize the Administration to advertise and seek bids for the removal and disposal of asbestos-containing materials from Boiling Springs High School and 16 Forge Road property.

Mr. Hartman inquired about work on 16 Forge Road property.

Mr. Gump clarified asbestos removal would need completed prior to any demolishing.

Mrs. Weber noted that once this project is completed the district will be 100% asbestos-free. Currently pay for asbestos inspections every 3 years.

Mr. Hartman inquired about number of bids.

Mr. Gump responded that he anticipates at least three bids.

Mrs. MacIvor inquired about committee recommendations for these projects.

Mr. Gump responded that this is the final asbestos project. Previous ones were completed during other building renovations.

The motion passed unanimously.

PLANNING & DISCUSSION

Adoption of the Proposed Final Budget: South Middleton School District 2021-2022

Proposed Budget Recommendation

Mrs. Knavel commented she is struggling with 3% tax increase. Mr. Still agreed.

Mr. Hartman clarified about amount for average homeowner. Asked Nicole about figures for retirees and average income.

Mrs. Weber responded with 24.6% of township is retired. Local unemployment rate is 5.6%-6.1%.

Mrs. Rob commented she would not be comfortable voting on anything until facilities meeting, as budget and grants impact projects, noted upcoming renovations of YBMS.

Mrs. Knavel clarified concerns with grant monies funding positions, not facilities.

Mr. Greenbaum commented that about thoughts on primary purpose of grant funding and focus on students. Secondary use for facilities.

Mrs. Sellers clarified that 20% must be used for student remediation.

Mr. Still noted there are several types of grants and different uses.

Mrs. Meikrantz asked Mrs. Weber to explain comparison with other districts in county and budget deficit.

Mrs. Weber noted that all the budget presentations are available on the district website for review.

Mrs. Knouse noted that final numbers will not be voted on until June.

Mrs. Rob noted that she had asked for history of tax index which Mrs. Weber provided and highlighted millage rate. Balance of fiduciary responsibility and investing in

students. Suggested review of expenditures and defining critical items. Commented that she appreciates Mrs. Weber answering all her questions.

Mrs. Knouse noted that Big Spring School District's enrollment is declining and there has been construction of large warehouses throughout district which increase funding from taxes from those warehouses. Requested that Mrs. Weber pursue reassessment of warehouses in district.

Mrs. MacIvor commented with concern with 3% tax increase. Requested additional information on capital investments – potential costs of facility projects, salary information, outsourcing, and consultants. Potential enrollment increases from new housing developments. Noted that capital investment reserve is low. Inquired about increases over next 5 years to achieve 5% in general fund balance.

Mr. Still commented on alternative approach on view of tax increase and noted retired residents living on fixed income. Consideration of tax amount closer to cost of living increase of 1.3%.

Mrs. Meikrantz commented that taxes were not raised for a long time, she agrees with 3% increase.

Mrs. Knouse commented that slow and steady increases can positively impact.

Mrs. Rob inquired about 4 positions and grant funding.

Dr. Strine clarified that they were built into the budget for systemic programming. The 3% increase will get systemic program support and facilities.

Mrs. Sellers inquired about budget for long-term sub position.

Dr. Strine clarified long-term sub for one year and highlighted MTSS at YBMS and Rice.

Mrs. Sellers inquired about impact on content areas.

Dr. Strine responded with outline of staff and content areas.

Mrs. Sellers commented on positive impact on students and budget.

Mrs. Knavel commented that she feels it's a revenue issue, would like Board to reach consensus for Mrs. Weber to be able to create scenarios.

Mrs. Rob commented that she feels the Facilities Committee owes Board list of projects.

Mrs. MacIvor clarified that she does not need to see scenarios, would like to see figures on how to keep general fund balance at 5%.

Mrs. Knouse commented about Board reaching consensus and what is most important.

Mrs. Sellers inquired about on-going staffing positions.

Dr. Strine clarified about 3 on-going and 1 long-term substitute.

Mrs. Knouse inquired about contracting social worker position.

Dr. Strine responded that position is easiest to contract for.

Mrs. Sellers noted that role can be foundational piece of social/emotional health.

Mr. Greenbaum noted housing market impacts and communities with good schools.

Mr. Hartman commented that budgets are about wants and needs. Recommended sending Mrs. Weber questions. Education should be priority. Shared figures of South Middleton residents - 24.6% retired and 6.1% unemployed, nearly 30% of community.

Mrs. Sellers commented that this is real estate tax increases do not affect anyone who does not own property.

Mrs. Knavel noted that landlord's do factor that increase into rent.

Mrs. Meikrantz thanked everyone for the discussion.

Mrs. Knouse asked Board to send her questions about budget to compile and send to Mrs. Weber.

Mrs. Rob announced Facilities Meeting on Wednesday, May 12 at 7:00 pm.

Flexible Instructional Days (FID)

Dr. Strine outlined Flexible Instructional Days – virtual snow days for next year.

Mrs. Knavel inquired about snow days.

Dr. Strine responded that students would not have a traditional snow day.

Mrs. Meikrantz inquired about submission of plan.

Dr. Strine responded that it must be approved by PA Department of Education.

Mrs. Meikrantz inquired about flexibility of virtual snow days and traditional snow days.

Dr. Strine clarified that traditional snow days can still be used; this also gives option of virtual snow days.

Mr. Still commented that this allows compromise for snow days.

Dr. Strine noted that Mrs. Melanie Shaver-Durham adjusted the virtual snow day plan to allow for more time for students to have traditional snow day.

Mrs. Knouse noted that there is different planning for parents with virtual snow days.

Mrs. Meikrantz agreed with having flexibility.

Mrs. Knavel agreed with balance of traditional and virtual snow days.

Mrs. Knouse asked Dr. Strine to continue with application process.

2021-2022 CAIU Special Education Services Agreement

RJ Interpreting Agreement

Gavin Agreement

Dr. Strine noted that the contract has a not to exceed amount.

Mrs. Knavel inquired about possibility of lowering maximum amount.

Mr. Greenbaum suggested Board authorizes maximum limit.

Mr. Still agreed with having a limit.

Mrs. Rob commented on contract language and amount for retainer and deposit.

Mr. Pahowka agreed with Mrs. Rob explanation and that amounts can be adjusted.

Mrs. Meikrantz commented on number of hours that may be used and history of hours.

Mrs. Weber noted that first month may not be realistic number.

Camera Box Photography Agreement

Mrs. MacIvor commented that there should be option for students with financial hardship to receive photographs.

Dr. Strine and Mrs. Meikrantz noted Bubbler Foundation could assist.

New Story ESY Contracts

Vista School ESY Contracts

Mrs. Rob inquired about Vista school taking over certain Merakey services. Mr. Smith responded that Merakey is a part of the consortium services with no dedicated funds.

2021-2022 Central Penn Educational Associates Agreement

Dr. Strine noted this is to assist School Psychologist department.

ESS Paraprofessional Contract

Mrs. Knouse inquired about contract language. Dr. Strine confirmed the company changed their name and staffing levels will remain the same.

2021-2022 Therabilities Agreement

Dr. Strine noted this is for OT and PT services.

Personnel- Return from Child Rearing Leave

Personnel- Professional- Resignation

Personnel- Classified- Employment

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Dean Clepper – 8 Hickory Court Boiling Springs
Thanked Board for meeting face to face. Agreed with Mrs. Knavel's request for budgetary options and Mrs. MacIvor's request for budgetary projections over 5 years. Grant money and budgetary reserves are the same, once spent they are gone. Suggested use of grant money for one-time expenses. Compare budgets from past years.

Teresa Shakespeare (email) - 124 Third Street Boiling Springs
As a parent and grandparent of Bubbler's, I support the Jedi program and have confidence in our staff, administration and school board directors to review and evaluate our educational programs for our students. I am a retired middle school health educator and also school services director for the Department of Education, we must prepare our students for the real world that we live in.
In today's world, we need to respect all folks and prepare our students to be kind, grateful and understanding of those who are different.

Ashley Shakespeare Frey (email)- 297 Tanger Road Boiling Springs

First and foremost, thank you for having the integrity and passion for our children to want to implement a program such as the JEDI program. I have lived in Boiling Springs for 30+ years. I attended SMSD from Kindergarten-12th grade. Going to school at SMSD I had very slim diversity in my grade. If my memory serves me correctly, there were 2 Asian students, during the 10th grade we had one African American who was from the Army War College, and 1 member of the LGBTQ community. The confederate flag was "cool", and I am sure the N word was used freely. 95% of my graduating class was white and of privilege and we were sheltered by the bubble of Boiling Springs. To be totally honest I did not know diversity until I started working with my current employer 8 years ago. At the beginning of this school year my work had all of the employees attend a multi-day Cultural Training. I went into this training thinking how in the world could this training last that many days. Boy was I wrong! I came out of this training awake and now fully anti-racist. There is a big difference between being "not-racist" and being "anti-racist". To be "not-racist" you understand that all humans deserve to be treated equally, you do not demonstrate hate towards black people or POC and you are not active in your efforts and may be seen as neutral. To be "anti-racist" you are actively trying to dismantle racism, you learn about your own privilege and biases, you support anti-racist policies. I have a 2-year-old and a 5-year-old. My 5-year-old will be attending Rice next year. We have already began talking about topics that are included in the JEDI program at home. They are hard topics, but they are making him a better person. Many in our community are afraid of these topics. Those afraid do not see a problem with how things are, and that is the exact problem! We are doing a disservice to our children if we do not teach them more about justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. I want more for our children than I had at SMSD! It is 2021 and the world is a very different place than it was even a year ago. We must be progressive and offer our children a place to become better human beings. We need to create a space that all children feel safe and heard. We need to teach our children about the very real world that is outside of our bubble on Boiling Springs. "Unity and diversity are not opposites. We can achieve greater unity as we foster an atmosphere of inclusion and respect for diversity." - Quentin L. Cook

BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. MacIvor commented to Mrs. Weber on general fund balance and need to move funds from unassigned.

Mrs. Weber responded that it will not be above 8% this year.

Mrs. MacIvor recommended that Dr. Strine has carefully selected committee for diversity and inclusivity- students, retirees, taxpayers, etc.

Mrs. Knavel commented on how community gets things done – parade planning, Board meetings, and how we pull together to make things happen for students and families.

Mrs. Meikrantz recognized Teacher Appreciation Week.

Mrs. Sellers commented teachers need caffeine for the final stretch.

Mr. Hartman announced parade planning and future committee meeting in Board room.

Gibran thanked Mr. Hartman for planning the parade.

Mrs. Rob thanked administrators for attending the meeting. Shared information about slides from Stock and Leader from presentation.

Mrs. Knouse thanked administrators for attending meetings and providing information on what is happening in the schools.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

Enrollment Report (attached)

May Board Calendar

May 10, 2021- Athletics & Student Activities Committee Meeting- 6:00 p.m.

May 12, 2021- Safety & Security Committee Meeting- 6:00 p.m.

May 17, 2021- Regular Board Meeting - 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Sellers made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Knouse, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cristeen Beck
Board Secretary

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5/3/2021 Board Meeting – Public Attendance

Vicki Clepper

Dean Clepper

Douglas Miller

Shannon Snyder

Sophia Bounds

Marisa Netzel

Erin Brenner