

GREATER JOHNSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education Business Meeting
June 13, 2007
Johnstown High School

I. Called to order by Vice President Miller at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| James Levin | Leslie Buggeln-Bosworth | Robert Curtis |
| Robert Kosowicz | Susanne Fitzgerald | Russell Martin |
| Joanne Freeman | Scott Miller | |

ABSENT:

John David Praught

OTHERS:

John S. Whelan Katherine Sullivan Peter Hopke

II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

“In accordance with its practice, the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District does not permit oral comments from the public relating to specific personnel decisions regarding individuals employed by the District during the portion of its meeting where the Board permits public comment. Members of the public are welcome to send questions, comments or concerns regarding these or other matters to the Board in writing.”

- Corky (Corlous) Fisher inquired about the protocol and procedure for abolishing a position (specifically the reading teacher position on tonight’s agenda), especially given that a record number of dollars was spent in the budget for special needs kids and this position services them. Mr. Whelan advised that the district reviews staffing levels continually, even after the budget process, and reduces positions where there is a decline in numbers. He noted there is still going to be a full-time person providing the service, moving from another building according to seniority. Mr. Fisher also said he appreciated that board members had taken the time to call him to respond to an inquiry he had made prior to the board meeting.
- Pamela Darren indicated her child attends Jansen and she feels that the resource people are the kids support system and they become frantic when the people they depend on are gone.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Curtis seconded by Mrs. Buggeln-Bosworth to approve the minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on May 23, 2007.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

IV. SUPERINTENDENT’S/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS

- Retiring staff were recognized by Mr. Whelan & presented with a small token of appreciation from the Board and Administration.

Teachers

Connie Lais, French Teacher – Knox & JHS

Classified Staff

Jean Harris, Cook – Warren St.

- Mr. Satterlee announced that the New York State Public High School Athletic Association recognized seven of our varsity sports teams during the 2006-2007 school year as Scholar/Athlete Teams for having a team grade average of 90% or above for the sports

season. The following team members, whose grade point averages were used in computing the team average, were presented with a pin and patch and congratulated for their endeavors:

Field Hockey – Coach Quinn Sitterly

| | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Kylen Clark | Sarah Hafter | Ashley Snell |
| Holly Duesler | Olga Lawrence | Nicole Sprung |
| Natalie Engel | Michelle Raspanti | Shannon Walsh |
| Elise Friello | Britney Schlesier | Marlaina Wing |

Boys Soccer – Coach Jon Jennings

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mario Balzano | Brian Kested | John Roth |
| Travis Bevington | Nicholas Knapp | Zach Sanges |
| Joshua Goebel | Ethan Nicholson | Daniel Smith |
| Gregory Hansen | Jaime Pavez | Michael Stewart |

Girls Nordic Ski Team – Coach Jennifer Jurica

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Olga Lawrence | Samantha Simek | Marlaina Wing |
| Elisa McIntosh | Rachel Simonds | |
| Felicia Sanges | Tamara VanNostrand | |

Girls Basketball Team – Coach Tim Derwin

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Kylen Clark | Katie Kollar | Nicole Stock |
| Gretchen Derwin | Katie Nellis | |
| Rachel Derwin | Christine Ripple | |

Girls Lacrosse – Coach Denise Benton

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Marie Darling | Adele Friello | Britney Schlesier |
| Gretchen Derwin | Elise Friello | Amie Sedal |
| Rachel Derwin | Kelsey Palcovic | Samantha Simek |
| Holly Duesler | Michelle Raspanti | |

Boys Track & Field – Coach Walt Lane

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Mario Balzano | Matthew Deering | Ethan Nicholson |
| Travis Bevington | Nicholas Gillen | Tom Parenti |
| Ashton Day | Thomas Horning | Victor Ralbovsky |
| Evan Day | David (Chi) Nguyen | Jonathan Ugalde |

Girls Track & Field – Coach Walt Lane

| | | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Madina Alam | Natalie Engel | Christine Ripple | Karly Vdoviak |
| Anne Bacon | Chelsea Goodier | Nicole Sprung | |
| Taylor Baird | Amanda King | Alex Sweet | |
| Erin Bryan | Rebecca Kosowicz | Anna Swierzowski | |

- Mrs. Sullivan announced that every single grade level had exceeded the state average on the math test.
- Mrs. Sullivan asked each elementary building to provide a presentation regarding their Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) Program. Warren Street discussed their recent Adirondacks theme and advised that students had read for 75,000 minutes. Pleasant Avenue reviewed the themes used over the last three years, including Survivor Island, Amazing Reading Race and Readopoly. Jansen Avenue reported on their Go Wild & Read theme and said plans are in the works for next year. Glebe Street reported on their Joust Read medieval theme, which was coordinated with the art & music program and which garnered the participation of 202 students who read for 60,000 minutes. Mrs. Sullivan offered thanks for the parents who volunteer and make the programs so successful.

appointment of Tammy VanAvery as a Food Service Helper, \$10.35 per hour, effective June 4, 2007 through June 30, 2007.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

B. WARRANTS – April 2007

Motion by Mrs. Freeman seconded by Mr. Levin to accept the recommendation of the District Auditor, to accept the following warrants for April 2007, as seen in addendum #1:

General (A): # 47, 50
School Lunch (C): # 21, 23
Federal (F): #21, 22
Trust & Agency (TA): # 24, 25, 26

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

C. TREASURER’S REPORT – April 2007

Motion by Mrs. Freeman seconded by Mr. Levin to accept the recommendation of the District Treasurer, to accept the Treasurer’s Report for April 2007, as seen in addendum #2.

1. *Appropriation Status Report*
2. *Unrestricted Cash Balance*
3. *Handwritten Checks*
4. *Budget Transfer Schedule #7*
5. *Vendor Listing by Number (Vendor Additions)*

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

VII. EDUCATION ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL

1. Separations

a. Resignation of Jennifer Cronkhite, Elementary Teacher

Motion by Mr. Levin seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to accept the resignation of Jennifer Cronkhite, elementary teacher, effective August 1, 2007.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

2. Leaves of Absence

a. Maternity Leave of Absence for Helen Reed, Elementary Teacher

Motion by Mr. Levin seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the maternity leave request of Helen Reed, elementary teacher, from September 1, 2007 to approximately October 15, 2007, in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

Music – Pat Zullo \$2500 (category 1) + \$200 longevity
Foreign Lang. – Maria Greco \$1500 (category 2) + \$200 longevity

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

e. Term Appointments of Coaching Staff

Motion by Mrs. Freeman seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve term appointments of the following fall coaches for the 2007-2008 school year:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|---------|
| Tara Bruce, field hockey assistant #1 | \$2,399 |
| Nicole Reynolds, field hockey assistant #2 | \$2,114 |
| Jennifer Rockwell, girls' soccer head coach | \$3,257 |
| Michael Bruce, girls' tennis head coach | \$2,000 |
| Michelle Robinson, volleyball head coach | \$3,257 |

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – CPSE, CSE

1. Committee for Preschool Special Education

Motion by Mr. Levin seconded by Mr. Curtis to approve the minutes of the Committee for Preschool Special Education meeting(s) held on 6/1/07:

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 009140118 | 009140243 | 009140119 | 009140215 | 009140233 |
| 009140121 | 009140075 | 009140176 | 009140165 | 009140229 (x2) |

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

2. Committee for Special Education

Motion by Mr. Levin seconded by Mr. Curtis to approve the minutes of the Committee for Special Education meeting(s) held on 5/17/07, 5/21/07, 5/23/07,5/29/07, 5/30/07,5/31/07, 6/1/0, 6/5/07 and 6/6/07:

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 009140075 | 002500013 | 009140123 | 000970029 |
| 009140041 | 000960055 | 000950046 | 000960061 |
| 000950019 | 000240006 | 009140025 | 009140040 |
| 000940002 | 002400058 | 002400054 | 000240023 |
| 000930002 | 000970002 | 000990005 | 000880008 |
| 000880948 | 000900083 | 009140100 | 000870164 |
| 000240025 | 000920091 | 000860076 | 000900055 |
| 000990007 | 000910110 | 009140055 | 000890081 |
| 009140108 | 000910065 | 009140182 | 009140234 |
| 000910115 | 000900097 | 009140231 | 000900113 |
| 000980017 | 009140119 | 009140233 | 009140165 |

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

C. STUDENT MATTERS

1. Johnstown High School Band/Marching Band Trip to Richmond, Virginia and Virginia Beach, Virginia

*Motion by Mrs. Freeman seconded by Mr. Martin to **TABLE** the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve the Johnstown High School Band/Marching Band trip to Richmond, Virginia and Virginia Beach, Virginia for a concert performance and USSBA Marching Competition; leaving*

Johnstown High School on Thursday, October 4, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. and returning on Monday, October 8, 2007 at approximately 10:00 p.m.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

❖ Board members would like Mr. Jones to come to a future meeting to address questions and concerns they have regarding this trip.

VIII. BOARD OF EDUCATION ITEMS

1. Organizational Meeting

Motion by Mrs. Freeman seconded by Mrs. Buggeln-Bosworth to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Education be held on July 2, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. at the Johnstown High School.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

2. First Reading of Revised Policy #7642

#7642 – Extended School Year (July/August) Services and/or Programs

3. ~~First Reading of Revised Policy #7560~~ *Withdrawn*

~~#7560 – Notification of Release of Sex Offenders~~

4. Adoption of Textbook

Motion by Mr. Curtis seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to adopt the textbook Forensic Science for High School, published by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, for use in grade 12, beginning in September 2007

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

IX. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- JTA President Kathryn Zajicek voiced disappointment in the end of year schedule change at Knox and stated that a discussion would have been appreciated. She indicated that the notice not coming until June 1 impacted teachers' plans to pack-up classrooms, especially in view of the building being closed for the summer.
- Mrs. Fitzgerald inquired about the Knox schedule. Mr. Whelan explained that Knox made plans to dismiss students from June 12 until the end of the school year, except for exams, but were advised this schedule is only for the high school and that K-8 students are to remain in the building for full days until the end of the year. He noted this is the same process followed by three out of four surrounding districts.
- Mr. Curtis expressed surprise at the number of out of school suspensions imposed in the elementary. He inquired whether the principals think the system is adequate and whether a better in-school suspension system might be needed. Mrs. Sullivan will review this with principals during a future cabinet meeting.
- Mr. Curtis inquired about an incident on the senior trip. Mr. Beatty will attend an executive session to answer questions.

X. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 19, 2007 | Audit Committee Meeting Special Board Meeting | 5:15 p.m. 6:00 p.m. Executive Session Johnstown High School |
| July 2, 2007 | Organizational Meeting | 6:00 p.m. Public Session Johnstown High School |

XI. WORKSHOP

Board Discussion re: Enrollment & Facilities

- Mrs. Freeman announced this would be a beginning stage discussion to express ideas and thoughts, with no decisions being made tonight. It was suggested to limit discussion to 30 minutes.
- Mrs. Freeman indicated enrollment numbers have been declining and will not be increasing anytime soon, due in part to families leaving the area as employment has been lost. She offered that, if numbers keep declining, the Board may need to take some form of action, and suggested things to consider might be bringing the sixth grade to the junior high; moving the junior high to Warren Street and decreasing the elementary buildings to three, then possibly turning one building into a transportation area and selling Irving.
- Mrs. Fitzgerald reported we are down seven sections, which is ½ of a school (there are 14 classes in K-6; in one building there are 4 singletons and in another there are 3). She questioned whether we should keep cutting staff or look at shifting or consolidating buildings. She feels any action should not involve cutting programs or taking away from time on task for students, but staff shouldn't have hours of downtime. She proposed that if the numbers hold or go up, we take no action, but if longterm collection of data shows they continue to dip, a five year plan might be in order, being proactive rather than reactive.
- Mr. Kosowicz indicated that while no one wants to lose a school, costs are increasing and we need to save dollars. He said the issues will need to be framed so that people can look at them logically rather than emotionally and noted that decisions can't be based on hope, they need to be in the long term best interests of the district.
- Mr. Martin asked that the board members talk without fear. He indicated Irving Street was once a neighborhood school and that there used to be ones on North and South Perry Streets that don't even exist anymore. He noted in his six years on the Board, he has seen the budget increase from \$19M to \$27M and that people cannot continue to sustain these increases. He suggested a serious discussion regarding closing a school and perhaps mothballing it in case industry increases and brings more enrollment. He stated this is a business and it is the board's job to take the bull by the horns and adopt some realism.
- Mr. Levin said the public needs to see the proposals and the dollars and cents behind it. He suggested working with city and county government to promote the area and help bring people and business in to reduce the tax impact.
- Mr. Kosowicz noted that in relation to Mr. Martin's observation that the budget had risen by \$8M in six years, the average person's salary hasn't increased by 40%. He also noted that recent new businesses in the area hadn't necessarily brought more jobs, just a shifting in jobs.
- Mr. Miller asked whether a special committee should look at options and costs. Mr. Curtis requested that the full board put forth as many ideas as possible and then send to a committee to narrow down and bring back to the board with dollar figures.
- Mrs. Sullivan noted that in November 2004 the district mailed surveys to 3,951 taxpayers and received less than 400 responses. She further indicated we have looked at options and compiled data in prior years and these figures are readily available.
- Mr. Kosowicz suggested developing a timeline such as six months to open up and then present a plan; he said it shouldn't become just a debate or a constant rehashing because nobody wants to make a hard decision.
- Mr. Curtis suggested a trigger number and that if enrollment decreases to a certain amount, that would be the time to take action. He requested more discussion and a flip chart.
- Mr. Martin requested workshops over the summer and making a plan in earnest in the fall.
- Mr. Levin wants discussions conducted by the full board where the public can hear. Mrs. Fitzgerald stated that workshops are open to the public.
- Mr. Miller requested that the comments sent in on the 2004 surveys be presented for discussion. Mrs. Sullivan indicated they were previously typed up and copies can be provided.
- It was decided to continue the discussion at a workshop following the July 2 board meeting.

XII. MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE EMPLOYMENT HISTORY OF PARTICULAR PERSONNEL

Motion by Mr. Kosowicz seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to go to executive session for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person at 8:19 p.m.

VOTE: 8 Yes 0 No

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Curtis to adjourn at 9:47 p.m.

VOTE: 8 YES 0 NO

Respectfully submitted,

Larraina Carpenter
District Clerk