

**WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**School Board Work Session Minutes**  
**April 21, 2008**

The Wyomissing Area School District Board of School Directors' work session convened at 6:00 p.m. with President Snyder presiding.

PLEDGE OF  
ALLEGIANCE

Following the pledge, the secretary called the roll of board members.

Board Members Present: Mrs. Barnett, Mr. Althouse, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Hinsey, Mr. Larkin, Mrs. McCready, Mrs. Sakmann, Mr. Portner, and Mr. Snyder.

Administrators Present: Dr. Speace, Ms. Garman, Mr. Ashton, Mrs. Motze, Mr. Babb, Dr. Moyer, Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Simyak, Mrs. Whye, Dr. Pulkowski, Mrs. Steele, Mrs. Mason, and Dr. Larson.

Others Present: Diane Schaeffer, recording secretary. Ken Phillips arrived at 6:45 p.m. Audience sign-in sheet included as part of these official minutes.

Mr. Snyder welcomed everyone and reported that the Board met in executive session on April 2, 2008, and no action was taken, and they would meet again at the conclusion of the work session to discuss personnel matters.

President Snyder announced that the Board would meet next Monday, April 28, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.

The following presentations were made:

Brenda Steele, Food Service Director, shared two student-made videos, "Nutrition Rap."

Jen Trani, Art Department Chair, and teacher Mike Miller highlighted the various awards won by district students.

Certificates were presented to the members of the State swimming championship relay team by Jen Motze, Director of Athletics. Coach Holt was also honored for being named Berks County Coach of the Year.

Mrs. McCready offered congratulations on behalf of the School Board.

President Snyder announced that a tentative date of June 3 was established for the referendum vote, but the Berks County Board of Elections rendered a decision to deny the request because of logistics and legal issues.

President Snyder said that the Board needed to discuss other possible dates in July, August, or November. He noted that July and August might not be the best times because of vacations. The benefit of November would be cost savings but may not be the best choice. Mrs. Mason reported the approximate cost to hold a special election would be \$12,000.

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Mr. Fitzgerald indicated that November would be the best time to get the most people to the polls. After further discussion, an informal vote was taken by President Snyder and the majority agreed on July 1, 2008, as the date for the referendum vote.

President Snyder indicated that Mr. Boland would be arriving later in the evening, and he would amend the "Desire" Resolution, and they would contact the Board of Elections to seek their approval.

**Liaison Reports –**

WAEF – Mrs. Sakmann reported on the recent successful technology forum organized by the Foundation. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that he would like the Board to look into distance learning possibilities.

Legislative/PSBA - Mr. Fitzgerald reported that each year PSBA puts together a list of issues to present to the legislators. He invited members to contact him with items for inclusion. Items on the list are charter schools, prevailing wage, and cyber charter schools.

**Personnel –**

Ms. Garman indicated that the Personnel Report will be recommended for approval at the April 28 meeting, but requested that the board approve the motion to hire two substitute van drivers that are needed.

President Snyder requested a motion to approve Lance Atkins and Barry Lehr as substitute van drivers effective April 22, 2008, which was made by Mrs. McCready and seconded by Mrs. Sakmann.

Yeas: Althouse, Barnett, Fitzgerald, Hinsey, McCready, Larkin, Sakmann, Portner, and Snyder.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Dr. Larson noted that Chris Nugent will be at the meeting next week to report on the energy savings the district has realized this year.

Ms. Garman noted that interviews for the IT Director are scheduled for April 28 and they are continuing the search for the Director of Building and Grounds. She also reminded the group that the Health Fair is scheduled for Thursday, April 24, in the old gym at the high school.

**Curriculum –**

Dr. Larson noted that the Summer Safari booklet was created by Dawn Hart, a teacher at West Reading Elementary Center, who is working towards her principal certificate.

Dr. Marcia Moyer presented information on the proposed Harcourt School Publishers literacy materials for language arts curriculum in grades K-3. It was agreed that the item would be added to the agenda for approval at the next meeting.

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**Finance –**

Mrs. Mason provided a 2008-09 budget update and noted that on April 28 the Board will be asked to adopt the proposed final budget and it will be available for public inspection by May 7, 2008. The date for final budget adoption is May 27.

Mrs. Barnett asked what had been cut from the budget. Mrs. Mason responded that no programs were cut, and the library costs were phased in over a three-year period rather than one year as was presented at the March 31 Board meeting. In addition, Mrs. Mason told Mrs. Barnett she would send her the reduction worksheet.

Mrs. Barnett also asked if salaries would be increased to keep the District competitive. Mrs. Garman responded that information is being presented to PSBA to get salary ranges.

At the conclusion of the budget discussion, President Snyder asked for a motion to approve a resolution amending and restating a prior resolution for the purposes of refinancing General Obligation Bond Series 2003 and 2003A. A motion was made by Mrs. Barnett and seconded by Mr. Hinsey to rescind the prior resolution and proceed with a note resolution with a net \$100,000 savings parameter.

Yeas: Althouse, Barnett, Fitzgerald, Hinsey, Larkin, Sakmann, Portner, and Snyder.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

**Facilities –**

Mr. Althouse stated that a liaison meeting was held and plans to update the high school health suite to meet ADA requirements were discussed. Reconstruction is necessary to meet the needs of students with wheel chairs.

Mrs. Barnett inquired what the cost estimate would be. Mrs. Mason replied that costs would be received next week from the engineer.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the Reading Hospital should be contacted for suggestions or equipment. Dr. Larson reported that she spoke to the nurses at West Reading and the high school but we could look into that.

**School Activities & Athletics –** No agenda items.

**Technology –** No agenda items.

**Superintendent's Office –**

Dr. Larson reviewed the items recommended for approval at the next meeting.

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**New Business** – None.

**Old Business** –

Mr. Althouse asked if there was any further information on the parent concerns voiced at the March 31 Board meeting.

Dr. Larson announced that letters were drafted for parents of West Reading and high school students outlining the formation of a parents' council or forum and the opportunity on May 15 for parents to hear about the data reviewed for 7<sup>th</sup> grade placements.

Dr. Speace reported that 14 responses were received after the letters were sent and information will be provided about the meeting planned for May 5.

Prior to public participation, President Snyder announced that the Board would need to vote on the new date for the special referendum election but they would postpone the vote until the arrival of the solicitor and at the conclusion of the executive session.

**Public Participation** –

Mrs. Barbara Reeser asked what is in place to keep the list current on per capita tax records. Mrs. Mason responded that currently we rely on the information we receive from our forms that are filled out. We will be doing a census enumeration mailing in the upcoming months to help with updating our records. Mrs. Reeser suggested a joint meeting with the Boroughs to see what lists they may be able to provide the District to stay current, especially with the rental properties.

Mr. Mike Mitchell, Sr. noted his confusion about the recent article in the Reading Eagle concerning the anonymous \$480,000 donation to the District and asked what, if anything, the District had to give up.

Mr. Snyder responded that nothing had been given up and explained that the agreement was part of the Wyomissing Square Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistant Act (LERTA) Project and was one of several motions approved by the Board at the March 7, 2007 Board meeting. Public documents were not requested by the newspaper.

Mr. Mitchell asked if the \$480,000 had to be used for the fields, and Mr. Snyder responded no, it did not, but the intent was clear that it was to be used for capital projects. In response to Mr. Mitchell's question, Mr. Snyder indicated it is earmarked for the fields and it is being held and earning interest.

Mr. Bill Murray asked if the agreement with the Hettinger's is a public document and Dr. Larson stated that it is.

Mr. Murray noted that the agenda does not contain anything about changing the referendum vote date and it is too late to comment after action has been taken. He stated that if the Board is sincere about getting the most individuals to vote, November would be the best date, and he has concerns about the amount of money being spent to sell the project.

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Mr. Murray asked why it is taking a long time to hire a Director of Facilities and Technology. Dr. Larson responded that salary is a problem and they are looking for someone with the right qualifications. There are four candidates for Technology that are being considered.

Mrs. Barbara Cafurello asked what the salary ranges are for the positions. Ms. Garman answered that the Director of Facilities is approximately \$80,000 and Technology is \$65,000-\$80,000.

Mrs. Cristina Eaton asked for a copy of the letter that Dr. Larson said was sent home for parents about the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. She also stated that she was impressed with the K-3 literacy presentation.

At 8:36 p.m. the Board took a brief recess.

At 8:48 p.m. the Board reconvened the meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Barnett and seconded by Mr. Hinsey to change the date for the referendum vote from June 3, 2008, to July 1, 2008.

Yeas: Althouse, Barnett, Hinsey, McCready, Larkin, Sakmann, Portner, and Snyder.  
Nays: Fitzgerald. Motion carried.

The Board discussed how best to conduct the public participation portion of the agenda and the possibility of establishing a time limit or having questions directed to the President. President Snyder indicated if the Board is interested in changing the policy, further discussion would be necessary.

Mr. Althouse stated that changing setting a time limit for public comment would fuel resentment. It was agreed that discussion could continue at a later time.

Upon motion by Mrs. Sakmann, seconded by Mr. Larkin, the meeting adjourned to executive session for personnel matters at 8:52 p.m.

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Corinne D. Mason  
School Board Secretary

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**PERSONNEL REPORT**

- I. Approve Support Staff Resignation – **Kathleen McDade**, Special Education Instructional Aide at the JSHS, effective May 2, 2008.
  
- II. Ratify/Approve Support Staff Unpaid Leave Requests:
  - a. **Susan Bennett**, ESL Instructional Aide at WHEC, unpaid leave March 26, 27, and 28, 2008.
  - b. **Karen Ellis**, Part-time Special Education Instructional Aide at WHEC, unpaid leave April 16, 2008. *This is in addition to the dates of April 11, 14, and 15, 2008 approved at the March 31, 2008 Board meeting.*
  - c. **Linda Long**, Part-time Teacher’s Instructional Aide at WHEC, unpaid leave April 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, 2008.
  
- III. Approve Supplemental Activity Advisor Resignation – **Mariel Jordan**, Colophon Yearbook Advisor, effective the end of the 2007-08 school year.
  
- IV. Approve Part-Time Energy Educator/Manager for 2008-09 – **Chris Nugent**, at an annual stipend of \$20,500 for the 2008-09 fiscal year. *The stipend is the result of energy saving measures guaranteed by Energy Education.*  
  
*Background information: The actual revenue for the stipend is the savings realized from implementing Energy Educator’s energy savings measure. If the savings fall short of \$20,500, Energy Educator pays the district the difference as per the contract.*
  
- V. Approve Memorandum of Understanding – Act 93 Agreement.
  
- VI. Approve additions to district volunteer list.