
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

**MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2007, 6:00 PM
BERKSHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**REGULAR SESSION
HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY**

* The Board of Education recognizes the value to school governance of public comment on educational issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on school matters of community interest.

In order to permit the fair and orderly expression of such comment, the Board shall provide a period for public participation at every public meeting of the Board and publish rules to govern such participation. These rules are available at each Board meeting. Anyone desiring to speak is asked to make this request in advance. Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer. Comments shall be directed to the presiding officer; not to Board members individually. Board Bylaw 0169.1

CALL TO ORDER



PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Imhof was absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the agenda.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2007 Regular Meeting.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

EXPENDITURES:

Motion made by Mr. Manfredi, seconded by Mrs. Timmons, to approve the expenditures in the amount of \$764,964.11 for the month April and any necessary for May, along with month end reports, including amended certificate. Total General Fund Certified Revenues: \$10,460,091.34; Total All Other Funds Certified Revenues: \$2,135,383.63.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

INTEREST EARNED:

The treasurer earned \$18,337.70 in interest in April investments. The total fiscal year-to-date earnings are \$147,974.30. Current interest rate: Star 5.17%, Huntington 5.17%, Charter One 5.18%.

APPROPRIATION MODIFICATIONS:

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve all appropriation modifications for May as needed. Total General Fund Appropriations: \$10,088,229.19; Total All Other Funds Appropriations: \$1,787,016.20.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

ADOPT RESOLUTION:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to adopt a resolution to authorize the Treasurer to take any and all action necessary to procure tax-sheltered annuity/ies through payroll deduction.

Mr. Miller asked if we had this before. Mrs. Tramont stated that we approved the companies to come in and now we need to authorize the Treasurer to put the annuities in place.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

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DONATIONS

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to accept the following donations:

- ◆ DVD entitled "For Which it Stands" from Larry Ayer, on behalf of the American Legion Post 459, Burton to the Jr./Sr. High School Media Center.
- ◆ \$5,000 from Athletic Boosters to the B.H.S. Athletic fund.

Mr. Miller asked if letters will be sent to these people. Mr. Knapp replied yes.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Mrs. Tramont made a presentation of the Award from the Geauga Safety Council for our outstanding job in keeping our workmen's compensation claims down in the last year. By having Mrs. Shirkey attend the required number of meetings and track our claims we also earn a 4% discount on our workmen's compensation premium.

APPROVAL TO REQUEST SCHOOL BUS BIDS:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to request bids for a new 71 passenger bus to update the District's aging fleet and to beat the price increase coming in 2008.

Mrs. Shirkey stated that she talked with the bus dealers about the current bus costs and availability. There are stock buses available that meet the EPA requirements and are at a savings to the district. As Mrs. Tramont passed out to you we would be saving substantial funds on the fuel costs and maintenance costs by replacing one of our older buses with a new bus.

Mr. Manfredi asked for an average number of miles per day our buses run. *Mrs. Shirkey replied about 1,291 miles a day with 10 buses on the road. The many stops and goes add wear and tear to the bus and the costs of a bus are going up about \$10,000 next year.*

Mr. Miller asked what would be the cost of a bus that we would bid for. *Mrs. Shirkey stated about \$70,000.*

Mr. Manfredi said with the cost of fuel going up and the added maintenance for older vehicles, he can understand the need to purchase now to save the cost of running older buses. *Mrs. Shirkey said she knew he would understand as he deals with vehicles on a regular basis. She also thanked the board for approving this item.*

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION TO TERMINATE TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT:

Motion made by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to terminate the agreement for a Transportation System for Students with Disabilities for schools in Lake and Geauga Counties.

Mr. Knapp stated that we haven't used East Shore in a while but we have used one of their buses. It has been returned. This is just a formality to disband East Shore.

Roll Call: Mr. Manfredi, aye Mrs. Timmons, aye Mr. Miller, aye Mr. Honkala, aye
Motion carried.

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RESOLUTION TO TERMINATE SPECIAL EDUCATION AGREEMENT:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to terminate the cooperative agreement for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Related Services among Lake and Geauga County School Districts.

Roll Call: Mrs. Timmons, aye Mr. Miller, aye Mr. Honkala, aye Mr. Manfredi, aye
Motion carried.

ADOPT POLICY:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to adopt the Board Policy regarding Tax Sheltered Annuities for all employees.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

ACCEPT INVENTORY APPRAISAL PROPOSAL:

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Miller, to accept the proposal for Valuation Engineers to do a complete inventory appraisal of the District's fixed assets and supply the appropriate reports.

Mrs. Tramont stated that it would be a good idea to have a complete appraisal of the District's fixed asset inventory especially since we have sold two buildings, consolidated furniture and held an auction. This would give us a clear count of our inventory for reporting purposes as well as for insurance purposes.

Mrs. Timmons asked if we have had an appraisal before. *Mrs. Tramont responded yes, but it has been several years since we have had a full appraisal.*

Mr. Manfredi asked about the depreciation value and how it is set. *Mrs. Tramont said that she has worked with this company before with her last job and they are up on the depreciation schedules that the State Auditor's suggest. They do a great job with the whole process.*

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL TO CHANGE SERVICES:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve changing waste disposal services from Universal Disposal to Waste Management at a cost savings of nearly \$100 a month, to begin in June, 2007.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S OVERVIEW:

Brief overview of two beneficial on-line programs to help maintain fiscal responsibilities in the District.

PaySchools – on-line payment processing system to be used by the parents to pay the various fees associated with their child's education.

Esber Cash Register – computerized lunchroom system, designed to make the lunchroom run more efficiently, increase the number of students participating in free and reduced lunch programs by eliminating the "stigma" of being on the program and recouping the initial set-up fees within 2-3 years.

Mrs. Tramont stated that the PaySchools program is connected to our school website, where a parent can go online to shop for the student fees they need to pay for their child and then can pay for them with a credit card or

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with an electronic check direct from their checking account. This program gives the parents an opportunity to pay by credit card and has been proven to increase the number of fees paid in a timely manner and reduce the number of outstanding fees by year end. There is no set-up fee or maintenance fee. We are only charged a 3.5% processing fee each month on the total cost of the parent's shopping. If nothing has been paid that month then we are not charged anything. We are able to set up the program to meet our needs. The parent's payment information is secured and the school district does not have access to it. It is not currently connected to our EMIS program but it does have the state accounting codes and they are working on the EMIS connection. Shaker Hts. School District is currently using this program and has seen an increase in fees paid on time.

Mrs. Tramont also discussed the Esber Cash Register program. This is a lunch room program that has been proven to save time in the lunch lines and increase the number of lunches served. The student is given a 4-5 digit code number which they enter into the system when they enter the lunch line. The child's picture and account information comes up on the screen for the cashier. She then uses a touch screen to enter the lunch purchased and the amount is deducted from the student's account. The parents are able to send in money to apply to the student's account or they can pay by credit card with the PaySchools program. It is currently being connected to this program. The system will print out letters for the parents if the account is low or if the student had to charge a lunch. It will also print out the necessary reports for state reporting purposes and well as balance the cash drawer for the day. There is an inventory program that will help with tracking food purchases as well. Ledgemont Local Schools has had this program for a year now and Newbury Local Schools had it installed last month.

Mr. Manfredi asked if the kids get a card to swipe. Mrs. Tramont said they get a number that stays with them through high school. Ledgemont gave their kindergarten students a popsicle stick with the number on it and within a month they did not need to use the sticks.

Mrs. Ducca said that the kindergarten lunch will be changed to better accommodate the class and this system will greatly help to ease lunch time. It can get crazy.

CONTRACT WITH PAYSCHOOLS:

Motion made by Mr. Manfredi, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to contract with PaySchools On-line payment processing system for FY 2008.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

CONTRACT WITH ESBER CASH REGISTER:

Motion made by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Miller, to contract with Esber Cash Register lunchroom systems for FY 2008.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVE FINAL 5 YEAR FORECAST:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to approve the final five year forecast for FY2007.

Mrs. Tramont stated that we need to approve this final forecast and submit it to our A-site prior to the end of May so they can process it and file it with the State by the required May 31st deadline. It was nice to have the levy pass and make the forecast process much easier than to have to plan for major cuts in our budget.

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Mr. Knapp reported that there is a line of interest on our website that will connect you to the State five-year forecasts of all school districts. We will get this forecast out on our website soon.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

VOCATIONAL REPORT

Mr. Miller stated that the levy did not pass, so they will need to step back and look at where to go from here. The student project house is up for sale.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Levy Committee – Mr. Honkala stated it was a great day yesterday. Susie Burzanko received the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year award and the levy passed. He then read the following news release:

The Board of Education is grateful to the voters of the Berkshire School District of their support of Issue 2. This issue will bring local financial stability to the District for the next few years as efforts continue at the State level to resolve that piece of school funding crisis. The Board pledges to continue the close monitoring of its expenses so that maximum resources can be applied to student achievement.

The Board is also grateful to the Levy Committee co-chaired by Linda Stone and Tom Curtin, the Levy Committee Treasurer, Shellie McDermott, and all the countless staff, business and community volunteers. Special thanks to Preston Motors and ComDoc for their assistance in disseminating levy information. Ultimately this success is the result of teamwork and shows us the great things possible when many work for the common good.

The Board will now move forward and consider the facility needs of the District as it prepares to close Troy Elementary at the end of the 2007/08 school year. The Strategic Plan's recommendations will be carefully considered and the community's input will be vital as this process moves to the finalization of a plan.

The Berkshire Schools are everyone's schools and we invite all of our residents to be involved in the exciting things that lie ahead of us as we close out the first decade of the 21st century.

Mr. Honkala went on to say that there was a lively meeting at Linda's sister's house where two folks in attendance were against the teachers. He listened to their comments and then asked them "Other than parents who has the biggest impact on your children?" After some thought they said, "Teachers." Tim then asked, "Do you want unqualified folks teaching your children? Because you get what you pay for." Tim then said thanks to all who helped out and in particular to our community for showing us their support.

Mr. Knapp stated that over 2,200 voters came out and that is the highest turnout in a special election for us. Great job to everyone!

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS (PRINCIPALS' UPDATES)

Due to technical difficulties the presentations were moved to the end of the meeting.

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PERSONNEL:

Certified:

Motion made by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve substitute teachers on the County E.S.C. certified substitute list.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to approve the placement of substitute teacher on the salary schedule after 60 consecutive days in the same position. Aimee Green, subbing for Rennae Yun at the H.S. while on sick leave. (Level III, 9 years' experience, on a per diem basis for balance of year.)

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve fifteen extended days for Dr. Symsek, 2006/2007 school year, as needed and upon approval of Superintendent.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to approve the following extended days for the 2007/2008 school year.

- ◆ Matt Marks, 15 days
- ◆ Mary Martin, 10 days
- ◆ Dan Itschner, 10 days
- ◆ Kathy Pinkava, 8 days
- ◆ Jackie Arnold, 4 days

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Manfredi, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Mark Smithberger as teacher and Athletic Director, effective July 1, 2007, contingent upon approval of his contract with Bay Village.

Mr. Honkala stated that Mark has done a great job here. He came in when we started the full pay-to-participate program and did an outstanding job organizing that and making it work.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Classified:

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Timmons, to accept the resignation of Mary Ellen Warren, Classroom Assistant, effective end of 2006-2007 SY.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve the continuing contract for Lisa Shirkey, Secretary, Transportation Department (salary and benefits per current negotiated agreement).

Mr. Honkala and Mrs. Timmons both stated that Mrs. Shirkey does an outstanding job.

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Mr. Manfredi stated that the safety award says a lot for her abilities.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the following one-year contracts for the 2007/2008 SY:

- ◆ Jennifer Ambrose, Secretary, Burton Campus (8 hours, 210 days, \$12.17 per hour)
- ◆ Mary Barcikowski, Cafeteria Supervisor, \$29,841.61, current salary

Mr. Manfredi asked if there was any change in the cafeteria set-up at this time. Mr. Knapp said no, Mary is set to retire at the end of November and then we will have to make changes.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to approve the following two-year limited contracts (2007-2008 SY/2008-2009S SY) with salary and benefits per current negotiated agreement:

- ◆ Nicole Holschuh, Classroom Assistant
- ◆ Linda McKinnon, Cook
- ◆ Carolyn Huff, Transportation Assistant
- ◆ Stephanie Butler, Playground Assistant
- ◆ Louis Wagner, Part Time Custodian - Troy

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve Jayne Sickafoose as a volunteer advisor for Badgerettes for the 2007-2008 school year.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve list of potential graduating seniors for 2006-2007. Please note that inclusion on this list does not guarantee graduation if all requirements are not met. Final list will appear in the June 2007 agenda.

Mr. Manfredi asked if there were any that were not going to make it. Mrs. Sethna stated that there are two students waiting to hear about their OGT test scores. They will get their diploma when they pass the test.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve awarding a high school diploma to Michael Edward Lorince, World War II veteran, as all requirements set down by the State of Ohio and as verified by the Geauga County Veteran's Commission have been met.

Mr. Manfredi asked if there would be any presentation for this. Mr. Knapp stated that Mr. Lorince would be at the June board meeting and will be an exofficial member of the class of 2007.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

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Motion by Mr. Honkala, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to award a stipend of \$250 to Laurie Lamb, art instructor, for setting up and supervising the Berkshire Schools booth in the Education Building at the Great Geauga County Fair for 2007.

Mr. Honkala stated that she did a great job last year. Mr. Knapp commented that we had a spectacular display last year.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Honkala, to approve the Open Enrollment Policy for the 2007-2008 School Year for students grades 7-12 residing in adjoining districts and for staff members children in grades K-12 per negotiated agreement.

Mr. Manfredi asked if anything has changed. Mr. Knapp replied no but must annually vote on this policy.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Timmons, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve a 14 month agreement with Saf-T-Net for Alert Now services for 14 months at a cost of \$2500.00 for the 07-08 school year, per Ohio Schools Council pricing.

Mr. Knapp said that we have been looking at different ways to call parents in emergency situations. Ohio Schools Council went out for bids to help districts with this situation. It is a web-based program that would download the parent information and then within 10 minutes the system can relay to the parents any emergency message we have typed in. It is a worthwhile investment at only \$2.50/student. We can program it to contact only certain building parents for certain reminders if wanted to. But they caution against overuse of the system. Mrs. Sethna also attended the program.

Mrs. Sethna said they randomly took our cell phone numbers and entered them into the system to demonstrate how quickly the system can get a message out. Of the numbers entered a few were selected and were quickly notified of an emergency situation.

Mrs. Timmons asked if the district determines what an emergency is. Mr. Knapp replied yes.

Mrs. Timmons also asked if we are able to update for new students. Mrs. Sethna said yes.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Manfredi, to approve membership in Ohio High School Athletic Association for 2007-2008 School Year.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Neola Policies – First Reading – The policies were not received – have been delayed so we will need to approve at the next meeting.

Old Business

None.

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New Business

Mr. Knapp requested a special executive session meeting to be held on May 16th at 6:30 pm at the Board Office for the purpose of real estate. Notice to be given to the papers.

Open Public Participation

Liz Hess received 1st prize for her essay project at the State of Ohio.

PRESENTATION BY SENIOR CLASS – RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Josh Stone, Gillian Hansel and David Owen made presentations of their honors English research projects. A job well done.

PRESENTATION BY SENIOR CLASS – NEW YORK TRIP:

Rick Portman made a presentation of the senior class trip to New York. Another nice job.

Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Honkala and seconded by Mr. Miller to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at: 8:06 pm.

NOTE: The June 4th Board meeting will begin at 5:30 pm to accommodate the Sixth Grade Promotion Ceremony.

Mr. Tim Honkala, President

Mrs. Merry Lou Tramont, Treasurer