

Port Allegany School District  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Reorganization Meeting  
December 2, 2019

**MINUTES**

Call to Order

Superintendent Buchsen brought the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the high school library with a moment of silence and the flag salute. Mr. Moate called the roll.

Roll Call

Board Present: Dr. Mark Carlson, Mr. Kerry Hawver, Mr. Donald Tanner, Mr. Adam Moate, and Mr. Gary Buchsen.

Others Present: Assistant Principal Erika Emerick, Justin Fillhart, Bonna Johns, Sean Lathrop, Erica Petruzzi, Jason Stake, Jonathan Stehle, Lisa VanGorden, Robert Veilleux, Andrea Veilleux, Judy Mazzaresse, Angelo Mazzaresse, Hannah Hartman, Mary Lashway, and Trisha Kallenborn.

Administration of Oath

Mr. Moate read the letter of election results received from the McKean County Board of Elections.

Mr. Buchsen administered the Oath of Office swearing in the following elected School Board Members: Justin Fillhart, Bonna (Tanaka) Johns, Sean Lathrop, Erica Petruzzi, Jason Stake, and Jonathan Stehle.

Election of Temporary President

Mr. Buchsen opened the floor to receive nominations for a temporary president. Mr. Stake nominated Erica Petruzzi and Mr. Lathrop seconded. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Buchsen declared Erica Petruzzi duly elected to serve as temporary president. Mrs. Petruzzi assumed the Chair.

Election of President

Mrs. Petruzzi then opened the floor to receive nominations for President of the Board. Mr. Stake nominated Doctor Mark Carlson and Mr. Fillhart seconded. Mr. Stake moved to close nominations and Mr. Lathrop seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Petruzzi declared Doctor Mark Carlson duly elected President who assumed the Chair.

Election of Vice-president

Doctor Carlson opened the floor to receive nominations for Vice-president. Mr. Hawver nominated Erica Petruzzi and Mr. Lathrop seconded. Mr. Stake moved to close nominations and Mr. Lathrop seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Doctor Carlson declared Erica Petruzzi duly elected Vice-president of the Board of School Directors.

Committee Appointments

Doctor Carlson announced he will make committee appointments in January following review with Board members. Mr. Buchsen recommended that the Board consider appointing an Intermediate Unit Nine Board of Directors representative tonight to fill Mrs. Nasto's unexpired term. Doctor Carlson asked for volunteers and following brief discussion Mrs. Johns volunteered to serve. The Board agreed to have Mrs. Johns appointed as the district's IU9 Board representative. Doctor Carlson reviewed the various committees and current appointments with the Board. Board members volunteered to fill some of the spots vacated by former board members.

Appointed Adam Moate Primary Delegate and the Port Allegany Borough Manager First Alternate Delegate to serve as district representatives to the Tax Collection Committee (TCC) in accordance with Act 32. Motion: J. Stake; Second: D. Tanner. The motion was unanimously carried.

Re-appointed Mr. Jonathan Stehle as a representative to the Port Allegany Area Recreational Authority Board through December 2025. Motion: D. Tanner; Second: J. Stake. The motion passed unanimously.

Adopted the 2020 Schedule of Meetings. The meetings will be held the first and second Mondays of each month except as noted. Brief discussion was held. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: J. Fillhart. The motion was unanimously carried.

Designated The Reporter Argus as the newspaper of general circulation in accordance with Policy 005. Motion: S. Lathrop; Second: J. Stake. The motion carried unanimously.

### Communications

Mrs. Mackenna Bickford's request for maternity leave was read and discussed with the concern in finding a substitute. Mrs. Petruzzi moved to approve Mrs. Bickford's request beginning approximately March 10 through May 29, 2020 in accordance with district policy and federal and state regulations. Mr. Stake seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

### Public Comment

There were no comments relating to agenda items or in general.

Mr. Stehle asked if Title I and II staffing are consistent with what has been done in the past. Mr. Buchsen responded it is, and that the administration reviews this during the budget process in the spring.

Mr. Angelo Mazzaresse reported that a parcel of property behind his was given to the district by Mrs. Anderson which he has cleaned and improved over the last 30 years because it has made the community better and safer for children. New neighbors have come in and are now using it as a dump for their yard garbage and tree branches. Mr. Mazzaresse is requesting the Board give him control of the property in order to maintain and keep it clean in the future. Doctor Carlson indicated that the information will be forwarded to the solicitor for advisement and consideration. Discussion was held and Mr. Buchsen requested Mr. Mazzaresse's contact information to follow up.

### Superintendent's Report

Mr. Buchsen addressed the Baker Road transportation issue noting that he has arranged to have a conference call with Mr. Anthony Muccio to discuss. Mr. Muccio provided information as follows: Liberty Township plows late in the morning; Keating Township said the same, but offered to plow the turn-around for them; the issue with the stop request is that the road is not a safe two-way road and there are no guide rails which put other students in danger as well; and additionally in investigating past history there has not been a stop designated other than at the end of the road. Lengthy discussion was held among board members, Mr. Muccio, administration and Mr. and Mrs. Veilleux with various solutions suggested. Mr. Muccio will contact Smethport's transportation contractor to get additional information. Doctor Carlson commented that he sympathizes with the situation but feels that Mr. Veilleux should have considered this and had it resolved prior to changing jobs.

Mr. Buchsen announced the annual Winter Songs concert will take place next Friday and Saturday at the high school.

Mr. Buchsen reported that the cooperative USDA Distance Learning Grant was awarded in the amount of \$427,000. It will provide students real time distance learning opportunities, and possibly opportunities to take college level classes on campus. He extended thanks to the Potter County Education Council for their leadership in this initiative. This grant is shared with six other school districts in McKean and Potter counties.

#### Minutes of Preceding Meetings

Approved the Minutes of the November 4, 2019 Committee-of-the-Whole meeting and November 11, 2019 regular meeting. Motion: K. Hawver; Second: E. Petruzzi. The motion carried unanimously.

#### Finance

Adopted Resolution 2020-1 electing not to increase the tax rate above the index of 4.0% (as set by the state) to support the 2020-2021 budget. Mr. Moate provided an explanation noting a 4% increase would generate about \$85,000 in additional local revenue. Brief discussion was held. Motion: J. Stake; Second: K. Hawver. The motion carried unanimously and reads as follows.

Whereas, on June 27, 2006, the Pennsylvania legislature passed Act 1 of Special Session 2006, entitled the "Taxpayer Relief Act" (hereinafter "Act 1");

Whereas, Act 1 requires school districts to limit tax increases to the level set by an inflation index unless the tax increase is approved by voters in a referendum or the school district obtains from the Department of Education or a court of common pleas certain referendum exceptions;

Whereas, Act 1 does, however, allow a board of school directors to elect to adopt a resolution indicating that it will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the public schools for the following fiscal year by more than its index, provided the resolution must be adopted no later than 110 days prior to the date of the election immediately preceding the upcoming fiscal year;

"Whereas, the Port Allegany School District index for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is 4.0%;

Whereas, the Board of School Directors of the Port Allegany School District has made the decision that it shall not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the Port Allegany School District for the 2019-2020 fiscal year by more than its index;

And now, on this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of December, 2019, it is hereby resolved by the Port Allegany School District (hereinafter "District") Board of Directors (hereinafter "Board") the following:

1. The Board certifies that it will not increase any school district tax for the 2020-2021 school year at a rate that exceeds the index as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
2. The Board certifies that it will comply with the procedures set forth in Section 687 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (hereinafter "School Code"), 24 P.S. §6-687, for the adoption of its proposed and final budget.
3. The Board certifies that increasing any tax at a rate less than or equal to the index will be sufficient to balance its final budget of the 2020-2021 fiscal year.
4. The Administration of the District will submit the District's information on a proposed increase in the rate of a tax levied for the support of the District to the Pennsylvania Department of Education on the uniform form prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Education no later than five days after the Board's adoption of this Resolution.
5. The Administration of the District will send a copy of this Resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education no later than five days after the Board's adoption of this Resolution.
6. The Board understands and agrees that by passing this Resolution it is not eligible to seek referendum exceptions under Section 333 (f) of Act 1 and is not eligible to request approval from the voters through a referendum to increase a tax rate by more than the index as established for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

7. Once this Resolution is passed, the Administration of the District is not required to comply with the preliminary budget requirements set forth in paragraphs (a) and (c) of Section 311 of Act 1. Provided however:

(a) The Board understands and agrees that, upon receipt of the information submitted by the District as set forth in paragraphs 4 and 5 above, the Pennsylvania Department of Education shall compare the District's proposed percentage increase in the rate of the tax with the index.

(b) Within ten days of the receipt of this information, the Pennsylvania Department of Education shall inform the District whether its proposed tax rate increase is less than or equal to the index.

(c) If the Pennsylvania Department of Education determines that the District's proposed increase in the rate of the District's tax exceeds the index, the District is subject to the preliminary budget requirements as set forth in paragraph (a) and (c) of Section 311 of Act 1."

Approved refunding 2019 real estate taxes to the following persons as recommended by the McKean County Assessment Office due to clean and green status awarded: John J. and Mackenna K. Bickford - \$246.14 and Virginia Jo Louise Dowell c/o Eddie Graham - \$94.63. Motion: E. Petruzzi; Second: J. Stake. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Adjournment

Mr. Lathrop welcomed the new Board members.

Motion: K. Hawver; Second: J. Stake. The motion carried unanimously. Doctor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ADAM C. MOATE  
Secretary to the Board of School Directors