

# WATTSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

NOVEMBER 20, 2023

The Wattsburg Area School District Board of Education held their Regular Board meeting at the Wattsburg Area Elementary Center on November 20, 2023. President Jeremy Bloeser called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mrs. Britni Burlingham, Mrs. Amanda Farrell, Mrs. Lea Hetherington, Mrs. Nicole Lee, Mr. Shawn Matson, Mr. Steve Morvay, Mrs. Tara Pound, Dr. Andy Pushchak, and Mr. Jeremy Bloeser attended. Dr. Kenneth Berlin, Superintendent; Mrs. Rebecca Kelley, Assistant to the Superintendent; Mrs. Vicki Bendig Business Administrator and Attorney Christine McClure, Solicitor also attended.

## **Roll Call**

Motion by Mr. Morvay, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to approve the agenda and addendum as presented. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

## **Agenda and Addendum**

Motion by Dr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Farrlee to approve the meeting minutes of the October 16, 2023 Regular Board Meeting and the November 13, 2023 Work Session. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

## **Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Berlin introduced Mr. Englert who shared with the Board that all of the fall sports and activities such as marching band had an outstanding season. Perhaps one of the best overall in school history. Mr. Englert asked Mrs. Pikiewicz, Mrs. Cage, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Cosby to speak and introduce their students. Student representatives from each group shared their accomplishments and thanked the Board for their support. Dr. Berlin presented each student a certificate of accomplishment.

## **School Reports**

Mr. Bloeser congratulated the students on behalf of the Board for their accomplishments and dedication to get where they are today. He also acknowledged the coaches, volunteers, and parents for their hard work, dedication, and support.

David Buona addressed the Board and conveyed appreciation for the new High School Principal, Mr. Englert. He also commented that the new band director, Mr. Cosby is doing an outstanding job with the students and holds them to very high standards.

## **Guest and Citizen Comments**

Dr. Berlin acknowledged the Board members who are leaving the Board and thanked them for their outstanding work. He presented Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Matson, and Mrs. Pound with a small token of appreciation. Dr. Berlin said that being on a school board is a commitment that is not easy and that their service is greatly appreciated.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Burlingham to approve the following reports, payments, and invoices as presented:

- Revenue & Expenditure Reports for October
  - [General Fund](#): \$14,594,690.35
  - [YTD Budget to Actual Report](#)
  - [Capital Projects](#): \$376,346.23
  - [Cafeteria](#): \$583,667.37
  - [Cafeteria Profit/Loss](#): \$(12,929.34) YTD: \$14,410.35
- Checks and Invoices
  - [Exhibit A1](#) Checks Already Written: \$203,683.79
  - [Exhibit A2](#) Checks Already Written: \$23,279.87
  - [Exhibit A3](#) General Fund Bills: \$799,475.49
  - [Exhibit B1](#) Cafeteria Checks Already Written: \$283
  - [Exhibit B2](#) Cafeteria Checks Already Written: \$37.08
  - [Exhibit B3](#) Cafeteria Bills: \$55,779.41
  - [Exhibit D](#) SHS Activity Fund Report: \$63,367.98

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Dr. Puschak to approve the recommendation from the Erie County Tax Claim Bureau for the removal of taxes for the tax years noted and all future years for Parcel numbers: 44-015-037.1-002.65; 44-015-0037.1-002.64; 44-003-008.01-001.11; 44-015-037.1-002.58. These parcels were recently removed from the Assessment records based on the determination of no value or existence of each trailer per field review as outlined in [Exhibit E](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Morvay, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the following transfers:

- Monthly budgetary transfer from the budget vs. actual report as outlined in [Exhibit F](#).
- \$186,591.87 from Committed Fund for Paving and Concrete to Capital Projects for the Middle School Sidewalk and Athletic Complex and Batting Cage Projects.
- \$200,000 from Unassigned Fund Balance to the Committed Fund for Safety and Security Projects.
- \$400,000 from Unassigned Fund Balance to the Committed Fund for Paving and Concrete Projects.

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Morvay, seconded by Mrs. Burlingham to approve district wide participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) effective December 1, 2023, as allowed by a USDA Waiver for mid-year elections for SY 2023-24.

Dr. Pushchak complimented the business office and administration for providing this for our families. It should be very beneficial to our families.

## **Business Administrator's Report**

## **Exoneration of Delinquent Property Taxes**

## **Transfers**

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Morvay, seconded by Mrs. Farrell to approve the Accelerated Budget Opt-Out Resolution certifying that the tax rate will remain within the inflation index and no need to comply with the [Act 1 Accelerated Budget Procedures](#) for the 2024-2025 General Fund Budget as outlined in [Exhibit G](#). in a recorded roll call vote Mr. Morvay, Mrs. Pound, Dr. Pushchak, Mrs. Burlingham, Mrs. Farrell, Mrs. Lee, Mr. Matson and Mr. Bloeser voted to approve the Accelerated Budget Opt-Out Resolution. Mrs. Hetherington voted against the motion. Motion carried.

### **Accelerated Budget Opt-Out Resolution**

Motion by Mr. Matson, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the installation of additional Doyle security system access points, doors, and associated hardware as outlined in [Exhibit H](#) at a cost not to exceed \$35,000. Funds from Committed Funds for Safety and Security. Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

### **Security System and Doors**

Motion by Mr. Matson, seconded by Dr. Pushchak to approve the snow melt system for the middle school walkway at a cost of \$28,250. Funds from Committed Funds for Paving/Concrete Projects as outlined in [Exhibit I](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

### **Snow Melt System for Middle School Walkway**

Motion by Mrs. Lee, seconded by Mr. Morvay to approve the following:

- Amy Bobrowicz and Scarlett Seneta as additions to the ESS Substitute List.
- Mercede Myers (retro to October 17, 2023) and Adam Gottschling, Bonnie Griffith, Kennedy Turner and as an addition to the Service Personnel Substitute List for the 2022-2023 school.
- Accept the following resignations:
  - Barbara Daniels, custodian for the purpose of retirement effective October 21, 2023.
  - Elizabeth Garcia Learning Support Teacher effective November 17, 2023.
  - Joel Burlingame Technology Client Support Specialist effective October 24, 2023.
  - Lauren Fye, Elementary Teacher effective December 8, 2023.
- The following appointments:
  - Skylar Lint as Elementary Teacher at Bachelors, Step 1 retroactive to August 23, 2023.
  - Stacy Praetzel as Cafeteria Aide, Class B, 4.50 hours/day, 180 days/year retroactive to October 19, 2023.
  - Ashton Prothero as Custodian, Class B, 7 hours/day, 210 days/year retroactive to October 25, 2023.
  - Bethany Kula as Support Aide, Class B, 3 hours/day, 180 days/year retroactive to October 30, 2023.
  - Brooke Gibbs as Special Education Aide, Class B, 7 hours/day, 180 days/year retroactive to October 23, 2023.

### **ESS Substitutes**

### **Service Substitutes**

### **Resignation**

### **Appointments**

- Jennifer Morris as Long-Term Substitute Elementary Teacher anticipated November 28, 2023 through January 19, 2024 at Bachelors, Step 1.
- Hunter Wagner as Long-Term Learning Support Teacher anticipated November 13, 2023 through June 7, 2024 at Bachelors, Step 1.
- Mercede Myers as Custodian, Class B, 7 hours/day, 210 days/year effective November 21, 2023.
- Sherry Beckwith as School Social Worker & Student Assistance Program Liaison effective December 4, 2023 and the agreement between Mrs. Beckwith and WASD.
- Hannah Manson as a day-to-day substitute November 28 through December 8, 2023.
- Hannah Manson as a long-term substitute Bachelors, Step One anticipated December 11, 2023 through June 7, 2024.
- Tuition reimbursements as outlined in [Exhibit J](#).
- The agreement between Bayada Home Health Care Inc. and Wattsburg Area School District for substitute nurses as outlined in [Exhibit K](#).
- The following leave Requests:
  - A Leave of Absence utilizing Family Medical Leave of Absence and paid time off for Jennifer Malec beginning December 12, 2023.
  - A Leave of Absence utilizing Family Medical Leave of Absence and paid time off for Jerome Adamus beginning November 15, 2023.
  - A Leave of Absence utilizing Family Medical Leave of Absence and paid time off for Erica Fox beginning May 9, 2024.
- The following conference requests:
  - Vicki Bendig and Susan Huff to attend PASBO Annual Conference March 5-8, 2024 in Hershey, PA at an estimated cost of \$2,368. Funds from Professional Development.
  - Becca Kelley to attend Annual PAFPC Federal Programs Conference April 14-17, 2024 in Pittsburgh, PA at an estimated cost of \$3,500. Funds from Title IV.

Dr. Pushchak shared that the resignation of Lauren Fye is accepted with regret. She has done an amazing job here and we wish her the best. Mrs. Farrell echoed the sentiment.

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Dr. Pushchak, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the school calendar for 2024-2025 as outlined in [Exhibit L](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Burlingham, seconded by Mrs. Lee to approve the transportation requests and ratification of field trips since last meeting as outlined in [Exhibit M](#). Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

**Tuition  
Reimbursement  
Bayada Home  
Health Agreement  
Leave Requests**

**Conference Request**

**2024-2025 School  
Calendar**

**Transportation  
Requests**

Motion by Mrs. Pound, seconded by Dr. Pushchak to approve the following:

- Ryan Bemis, Amanda Bush, Katherine Graeca, Jessica Heaven, Amy Heslop, June Morey, Jaime Reynolds, Kelsey Scalise, and Andrea Yates as additions to the WASD Volunteer List.
- Accept the resignation of Kim Myers 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Track and Field Coach effective October 25, 2023.
- Accept the following resignations:
  - Donna Banks as ELA Extra-Effort Tutor effective October 27, 2023.
  - Michelle Kappler as Detention Monitor – WAMS, effective November 28, 2023.
- The appointment of Jen Poklembo, Wrestling, Other Assistant 7th & 8 Grade at step 2+.

**Volunteer List**

**Athletic Resignation**

**Extra-Curricular Resignation**

**Athletic Appointment**

Motion approved by a voice vote with no opposition. Motion carried.

Mr. Morvay updated the Board on the Erie County Vocational Technical School October JOC meeting.

- Open House in the evening
- Approved new program – Program, Protective Services to begin in the Fall of 2024.
- Renovations still on track to be completed in early February 2024.
- Contingency \$700,000 and \$800,000 from furnishings contingency left so there may be some funds left to go to seed their Capital Funds going forward.
- Reworked substitutes pay to entice substitute coverage.
- There are 826 students in the Tech School (which is an increase of 30 students from last year).
- All labs have 60% or greater participation.

The next meeting will be in December, so the next report will be in January 2024.

Dr. Pushchak updated the Board on the Northwestern Tri-County Intermediate Unit. Meeting report was sent out after the October meeting. Like the ECTS, the IU5 Board does not meet in November so the next report will be in January 2024. Dr. Pushchak noted that the IU now conducts Superintendent Searches. They conducted the recent searches for Millcreek and Girard which successfully produced candidates and are currently working with Penn Crest and Fairview School Districts. The IU has a team which includes the Executive Director and the Director of Human Resources, and they run the entire search.

Mrs. Burlingham expressed the pride for the athletes and looks forward to what is in store over the next few years. She is also excited about the Tech School and the Protective Services Program. She thanked Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Matson and Mrs. Pound for their work on the Board and she will miss working with together, but she looks forward to working with the new board members.

Mrs. Farrell shared thank you for the refreshments provided by the Nutrition Group. Mrs. Miller shared that the elementary students were treated to this for their Thanksgiving lunch. Mrs. Farrell also commented on how wonderful the evening's meeting was saying it was great to see the students and all their accomplishments. She thanked the community for supporting her and said that the administration and faculty have been awesome. From academics, to extra-curriculars and sports, the district has put the students first and shown that it's much more than just classrooms.

Dr. Pushchak commended Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Matson, and Mrs. Pound. He said they came onto the Board at a time that we haven't seen for a while, and they stuck with it. They were willing to learn, willing to talk, they brought their fresh perspectives, they respected us, and we respected them and that is what made this group successful. We appreciated that. Together as a group we put together some significant things together and it wasn't just some of us, it was all of us. What a fun night this meeting was to showcase all this district is doing. It doesn't happen by chance, it happens with purposeful planning, support from the Board, when our budget priorities match our academic priorities and our student priorities it all comes together. This doesn't happen in all districts, and he looks forward to the new Board members sharing their new perspectives. Thank you, Amanda, Shawn and Tara. You will be missed.

Mr. Bloeser echoed the sentiments and wanted to mention Mr. O'Donnell who was also in this cohort of Board members originally but he returned to the classroom. He also complimented Mr. O'Donnell for work with the students on the recent fall play. We have enjoyed working with all of the Board members.

There being no further business before the Board, upon motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Pound, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Signature on File  
Vicki Bendig  
School Board Secretary