

Regular School Board Meeting

January 16, 2024

A regular meeting of the Redbank Valley School Board was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Redbank Valley High School. The following members were in attendance: Chris Merwin, Heidi Byers, Chris Adams, Kevin Johnson, Bill Reddinger, John Kimmel, John Sayers, Brent Wile, and Matt Confer (which Matt attended remotely).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting on December 5, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Shirey had nothing to add to the Primary and Intermediate Report. No questions.

Mr. Hartle had nothing to add to the Secondary Report. Mrs. Byers asked for further clarification of the TSI (Targeted School Improvement) program. Dr. Rupp explained that high school special education students did not meet proficiency standards on the Keystone Exams. They also did not meet required attendance levels during the school year. Due to those factors, Redbank was placed on the TSI program. She mentioned that special education teachers were looking to improve attendance within their classes. No further questions.

Mr. Temchulla had nothing to add to the Special Education Report. No questions.

Mr. Rapp had nothing to add to the Maintenance Report. No questions.

Mr. Reitz had nothing to add to the Cafeteria Report. No questions.

Mrs. Reitz gave her Business Manager's Report. She is still working with the auditor to get things finalized for the general fund so the audit for the 2022-2023 school year can be completed. She continues to meet with Dale Kirsch from PASBO to assist with any questions that she might have. She is working on getting 1099's and W-2's out by the deadline. She has also sent out the purchase requisition forms to the teachers. They are due back at the beginning of February so steps can be taken to work on the 2024-2025 budget. Revenues are pretty consistent from last year's numbers. Revenues are \$11,778,861.79 while expenditures are \$9,714,442.70. No further questions.

Dr. Rupp gave her Superintendent's Report. She discussed three grants that were awarded/available to the school district. The first is a school mental health grant for \$113,000. This grant could be used to pay for the mental health/social worker in the district from August 2024 – December 2025 but there can be an extension until the money is spent. Therefore, the grant would cover close to two years of this worker. The second grant is a \$30,000 grant that could be used to pay for the school police officer. The total cost of the officer is \$50,000. A \$20,000 expense would still need to be covered by the district. The last grant is a competitive school grant. The amount of the grant varies. It could cover a number of

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different areas such as social workers, school police officers, and electronic lock sets. Dr. Rupp believes that the electronic lock sets would be the priority for this grant money. The total amount that the district can apply for in the grant is \$450,000. Dr. Rupp stated that she last applied for this grant 3-4 years ago and was granted \$250,000 for the metal detectors and other security purchases. She thinks that we have good odds with this grant because we haven't applied in a few years and grants like this tend to go in cycles. Mr. Sayers questioned replacement of the school doors that haven't been replaced yet, and Dr. Rupp stated that they are still on the list to be replaced. No further questions.

There was nothing to add to the Intermediate Unit Report.

Mrs. Byers had nothing to add to the Career Center Report.

There was nothing to add to the Board Committee Report.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Matt Darr spoke concerning the lack of adequate sized housing in the district. He believes that more affordable housing needs to be made for families in the area. He thinks housing needs to be made available to draw more students into the district. He brought up the possibility of the school district partnering with the Housing Authority to make this happen. Mr. Darr continued to speak of housing projects in other areas/school districts. Dr. Rupp asked questions concerning land ownership/how the process would work with the Housing Authority. Mr. Darr went on to explain the process. He used a local property in town as an example. No further questions.

OLD BUSINESS

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to approve the second reading of policies 801.1 – 812 as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Byers questioned record keeping and Dr. Rupp stated we have to have a records committee. John Sayers, Bill Reddinger, and Kevin Johnson said they would like to be part of the Records Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the updated Health and Safety Plan as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to approve the first reading of policies 813-828 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the secure vestibule building project at the intermediate and primary schools. Procurement will be through the bidding process with the cost not to exceed the budgeted cost of \$150,000 per building. Mr. Johnson questioned if we could use any of the safety grant money for this project. Dr. Rupp didn't think that the money could be used for construction purposes. Dr. Rupp stated that this \$300,000 was earmarked in the 2023-2024 budget based off the vulnerability assessment, and this money would come out of the General Fund. Mr. Johnson discussed about having a 3-5 year plan for capital expenditures and improvements so community is aware what is being done. Further discussion ensued between

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several board members and Dr. Rupp about this project. The board and Dr. Rupp decided to move forward with amending the language of the motion.

An amended motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the research a secure vestibule building project at the intermediate and primary schools. Motion carried unanimously.

All were in favor of the amended motion.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to approve the December 2023 Treasurer's Report, for the consideration to approve the December 2023 General Fund expenditures in the amount of \$1,803,493.16, and for the consideration to approve the December 2023 Cafeteria Fund Expenditures in the amount of \$27,182.13. Motion carried unanimously.

PERSONNEL

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers for the consideration to approve intermittent FMLA leave for employee #101 effective 12-13-2023. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to raise the rate for each bill collected by our tax collectors from \$3.50 to \$4.00 per installment and total per capita bill beginning in the 2024-2025 school year as presented. Dr. Rupp clarified that this expense wouldn't fall on the taxpayers and that this would be an increase in what the district pays the tax collectors. Mr. Sayers addressed the New Bethlehem Borough and Porter Township Tax Collectors that were in attendance and asked them several questions about their duties. Motion failed 3-6 (Chris Merwin, Chris Adams, Heidi Byers, Kevin Johnson, Bill Reddinger, and John Sayers)

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to pay 1/3 of the cost of the tax collector software, splitting the cost between the municipality, county, and the school district. Cost not to exceed \$1,000 annually. 8-1 (Kevin Johnson)

A motion was made by Chris Merwin and seconded by John Kimmel for the consideration to hire Barb Sayers as the Greenhouse Aide for 390 hours at \$9.71 per hour. Total cost to the district of \$5,411.86. Motion carried unanimously. John Sayers abstained from the vote.

A motion was made by Brent Wile and seconded by Chris Merwin for the consideration to hire Alisha Hibell as a substitute trainer when the current trainer is unavailable at a rate of \$40.00 per hour. Total combined cost will not exceed approved allocation for the position; all clearances on file. John Sayers questioned where the trainer was at a recent sporting event. Mr. Darr stated that the trainer had given him a list of dates that he would not be available for work and that happened to be one of the dates. Motion carried unanimously.

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A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by John Sayers for the consideration to approve Megan Nolf as a volunteer coach for Girls' Wrestling; all clearances on file. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the resignations of Bobbi McGuire and Java Bell, cafeteria workers, effective 12-22-23, and for the consideration to place Bobbi McGuire on the substitute list for the cafeteria. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Chris Merwin for the consideration to hire Carly Petruzelli as a cafeteria aide at a rate of \$11.24/hour. Total cost to the district is \$6,838.44. Dr. Rupp commented that there were still around five openings remaining on the cafeteria staff after having nine openings at the beginning of the year. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Chris Merwin for the consideration to hire Jaci Snyder as a cafeteria aide at a rate of \$11.24/hour. Total cost to the district is \$10,257.66. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Kimmel and seconded by Brent Wile for the consideration to accept the resignation of Jordanna Bowser, Musical Director, effective following the 2024 production of The Wizard of Oz. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by John Sayers and seconded by Kevin Johnson for the consideration to approve the addendum to the agreement with Bramlet Security as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

ADDITIONAL BOARD ITEMS : There were no additional items.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Darr wanted to make it clear to the board that he was not soliciting business for the Housing Authority. He just wanted to make the district aware that they would be willing to help in any way if needed. The board decided to put a Housing Committee together. This Committee will consist of Brent Wile, Chris Adams, and Matt Confer.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Kevin Johnson and seconded by John Sayers to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rochelle Reitz

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Board Secretary