

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2020
Muhlenberg High School – Lecture Hall
www.muhsdk12.org

Call to Order

The Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District was called to order on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 6:30 PM by Board President, Mr. S. Wayne Hardy.

Members Present

President – Mr. S. Wayne Hardy
Vice President – Mr. J. Tony Lupia, Jr.
Secretary – Mr. Thomas W. Gross
Assistant Secretary – Mrs. Cindy L. Mengle
Treasurer - Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster
Member – Mr. Garrett E. Hyneman
Member – Mr. Randall R. Madara
Member – Mr. Mark J. Nelson
Member – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
Solicitor – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Patricia L. Law

Administration Present

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola
Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Alan S. Futrick
Business Manager – Mr. Shane Mathias
Supervisor of Accounts – Mr. Mark Moyer
Director of Physical Plant and Transportation – Mr. Ken Patterson
Director of Special Education – Dr. Shawn Rutt
Supervisor of Special Education – Mrs. Amy Coyle
Data Administrator – Mr. Kevin Vanino
Behavior Analyst – Mr. Zachary Milch
Director of Food Services and Nutrition – Mr. Carey Kline
Director of Technology – Mr. Daniel Houck
Supervisor of Language Arts and Literacy – Mrs. Cathy Shappell
Community & Family Outreach Coordinator & Interpreter – Ms. Elizabeth Laviena
Athletic Director – Dr. Tim Moyer
High School Principal – Mr. Michael Mish
High School Assistant Principal – Ms. Lori Morris
High School Assistant Principal – Mr. C. Eric Schaeffer
Middle School Principal – Mr. Jeffery Ebert
Intermediate School Assistant Principal – Mr. Charles Payne
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mr. Antonio Mirabito

Visitors

Michele McCammitt	Inga Hobbs
Jolyn Casper	Jessica Levy
Deanna Lupia	Christy Oxenford
Cameron R. Rupert	Crystal Chwatek
Laura Ricards	Butch Imhoff

Educational Presentations

A. 2020-2021 Preliminary Budget Update (Exhibit A) - Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA

Mr. Mathias said the primary purpose for his presentation was the necessity of the Board to vote on the Act 1 Index. Mr. Mathias reviewed how the Index is calculated, what the District's Index is and what the District's max increase would be for 2020-2021 under the Index. He said the base Index for 2020-2021 which was established by PDE is 2.6%. Mr. Mathias said that number is statewide and from there, every district can adjust that based on their aid ratio for the current year. The Muhlenberg School District's aid ratio for current year is .6205; using PDE's formula, that is added to .75, and then multiplied by the base index of 2.6% giving the District an adjusted Index of 3.6% for 2020-2021. Mr. Mathias said this means the District can raise taxes at a maximum of 3.6% of the current tax rate which is 30.73 mills. He said looking at the calculation 3.6% of 30.73 mills is approximately 1.1 mills. That would be the max tax increase allowable under the Index. Mr. Mathias said 1.1 mills would generate approximately \$1,318,479 which is an estimate based on collectability and gambling revenue which the District gets through the Homestead. He said if the Board wants to go above the Index, it would require approval through PDE. Mr. Mathias said he did look at the exceptions which there are three – special education, school construction and retirement. Of the three, the District only would qualify for special education which would be about \$270,000 in additional revenue. That is not state revenue, it means the District could raise taxes an additional .21 mills above the 1.1 mills bringing it to a total of 1.31 mills. Mr. Mathias said this is the most important item for this month as the deadline for a decision to stay within the Index is tomorrow. Mr. Mathias included preliminary budget information in his exhibit; however, he said it is so early in the budget process that many of the numbers provided are based on trends, assumptions and by looking at the economy and where it is going. He said at this point, the expenditure side of the budget is pared down and different than prior years looking at realistic numbers for 2020-2021; and looking at the revenues over expenditures is how things are trending and projections.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Hoffmaster asked how much more revenue will the District receive from the new businesses coming into Muhlenberg. Mr. Mathias replied that right now a lot of them are just starting up so he does not know. He said the biggest one will be from the building being built on Route 61 across from Bob Fisher Chevrolet. Mr. Mathias said there are also a lot of appeals right now that could affect the number so he was unsure how much revenue the new business will bring in until the appeals have been settled.

Mr. Mathias said he did want to note that he added \$500,000 for Capital Reserve/Budgetary Reserve which is for planning and right off the top adds a \$500,000 deficit.

Dr. Macharola said he could assure the Board that he and Mr. Mathias will continue to work on the budget.

B. Physical Plant Update - Mr. Kenneth Patterson

Mr. Patterson reported:

- The High School Transformer Capital Reserve Project - This project was approved in October and tentatively scheduled to begin December 27th; unfortunately, the transformer did not pass the final QC at the factory. This project had to be postponed to a later date. Mr. Patterson said he did not have a date at this point and as soon as he does, he will communicate with Dr. Macharola and the rest of the staff.
- The Phone and Fax Upgrade Capital project for MEC is about 50% complete. Frontier was onsite during the holiday break installing hardware. Mr. Patterson said they will be testing the portion fax in the next few weeks; the phone portion will be ongoing into March.
- MEC Camera Upgrade Project is complete. Twenty-Four new digital cameras were installed. Mr. Patterson said the cameras look great and is a big improvement for that building.
- All outside contractor work for the MEC Security Upgrade Project is complete. A few internal punch-list items remain and should be cleaned up by the latter part of January.
- The District is soliciting quotes for two new 10-passenger vans to replace two 20-year-old vans currently in the fleet. Mr. Patterson hopes to have a proposal for the Board to consider for the February meeting.
- Also, on the horizon for possible Board consideration is repair work for the Middle School Chiller and replacement of the Administration Building Roof, all per the District's Capital Plan.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Voit asked if the District goes by state contracts or state pricing. Mr. Patterson replied, yes, all of the quotes are from COSTAR vendors. The truck recently purchased was from McGuire's Truck in Hershey and he said there is another six vendors that he solicited for the vans.

Mr. Lupia asked what will happen to the old vans. Mr. Patterson replied they will be auctioned off. Mr. Lupia asked what was wrong with the transformer. Mr. Patterson said the transformer had two bad tests in a row for oil sampling. He said it was highly recommended to replace it. Mr. Patterson said the new one did not pass its final quality control check and the factory would not release it and he was glad they found it before releasing it. Mr. Lupia said another roof is being done. Mr. Patterson said yes the administration building roof is in bad shape.

C. First Reading of Policy No. 918 - Title I Parent and Family Engagement (Exhibit B) - Dr. Joseph E. Macharola

Dr. Macharola presented the first reading of Policy No. 918 - *Title I Parent and Family Engagement*. He said in order for the District to receive Title I funds under ESSA, each school entity needs to conduct outreach to all parents and family members, and implement programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members in Title I programs. Such programs, activities and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful engagement of parents and family members with a child in a Title I program.

Some of the compliance with federal law with this policy and the school entity will address students participating in Title I programs and shall jointly develop and agree upon a written Parent and Family Engagement Policy. The District will involve parents and family members in a joint development with the school entities overall Title I plan, and:

1. Provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all participating schools in the school entity in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance;
2. Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant federal, state and local laws and programs so that these coordination's all line-up with ESSA.

Dr. Macharola said this is the Title I Parent and Family Engagement policy and one that the District must have.

Hearing of Visitors - Muhlenberg School District taxpayers and residents have an opportunity, at this time, to comment on matters of concern, official action, or deliberation which are or may be before the Muhlenberg School Board. The Board retains the option to accept all public comment at this time. Presentations should be limited to two minutes per person. In the event that the Board determines that there is not sufficient time for residents or taxpayers of the School District to comment, the Board may defer the comment period to the next regular meeting.

1. Deanna Lupia, 808 Allen Avenue, Reading, PA 19605

Deanna said she is a graduate of Muhlenberg (Class of 2016) and she is concerned that students at the high school are not given the opportunity to do the radio show, *Voices*. She said since the Reading Eagle changed ownership and it is no longer doing the *Voices* section, students are no longer able to participate in that section of the newspaper where they would be able to write different articles. Deanna said the gentleman who runs the radio show, *Voices*, attempted to reach out to administration about students from Muhlenberg participating on the radio show and she was requesting an explanation as to why students are not able to participate.

Dr. Macharola said he felt that communication is exceptionally important especially with the diversity and the multi-culturism that is embraced in the District and community. He said he thinks it is critically important to be able to communicate in writing and verbally; however, it is not that the District is not excited about opportunities in terms of communication, but there were concerns that were brought to the administration's attention that as a District had to be taken very seriously into consideration. Dr. Macharola said that concern is the welfare of the students who would be on-air blindly taking questions from call-in listeners. Students are unaware of what might be asked of them on a live radio show. He said that he has had other community members approach him and tell him that there have been statements made at times that were uncomfortable. Dr. Macharola said there would have to be an agreement that the District would not be held liable if the management of the station would allow a Muhlenberg School District student to be put in an uncompromising situation on a topic that he/she could be blind-sided by during an on-air program. He said these were the initial concerns and he never got satisfaction regarding that. Dr. Macharola said his concern will be to always protect the welfare of every child in the Muhlenberg School District. He said if a parent would want to allow a student to go on the show, that is their business and it is up to them. Dr. Macharola said he appreciated Ms. Lupia's question.

Ms. Lupia asked if the District has looked into beginning its own newspaper that would be run for the students; and, she asked what the difference is now and when she attended Muhlenberg and was on the radio as a student.

Dr. Macharola said he was not able to answer what the situation was back in 2016. He said he did not recall ever giving permission for students to be on the radio. He was unaware that students were on the show. Dr. Macharola said with regards to a school newspaper, he thought that would be wonderful. He said he liked what Ms. Lupia said as he believed that students' voices should be heard and he supported her; however, until the radio station vets out the details so that he knows the Muhlenberg School District students will be okay, he will have to let it up to parents who would want to allow their children to participate. Dr. Macharola said he never heard back from the radio station. He said he would ask Dr. Futrick and Mr. Mish to look into the creation of a newspaper as he thought that was a great idea.

Mr. Lupia said he heard that most of the students involved in the Voices program were more excited about writing stories for the Voices section of the paper.

Deanna said she thought it would be a great opportunity for students as it would help with their writing and public speaking skills. She also felt that that there could be some kind of advertisement for students to volunteer to do the radio show knowing that they would not be representing the school, but as something they could do on their own.

Mr. Hyneman said the difference between the newspaper and the radio show is that when a student writes an article, it is reviewed and people can offer advice, but when doing a live radio show, it is like trying to put toothpaste back in the tube; once it is out there – it's out there – toothpaste can't be put back into the tube. A newspaper article can be changed, but words spoken, can't be taken back on a live radio show.

Deanna said she learned through being on the radio to listen and to hear what people are saying which she felt gave her a moment to collect her thoughts before responding. She said there are students who would blurt out and say whatever, but she felt it taught them a lesson to think before they spoke on a certain topic and maybe the next time they understood that listening is better than blurting everything out.

Mr. Voit said he fully agreed with the Voices newspaper, and it is a great idea that the school may be able to do something similar; however, he absolutely did not agree with the Voices radio show and he would like to challenge the format of the show. He said he has listened to it and there are some people who have called in to address the students who are flat out racist. Mr. Voit said if it was a forum and there was a moderator, without any phone calls in, and a particular topic that the students would discuss, then okay. He said but anything with outside callers he would be opposed to and he supported Dr. Macharola in that if a parent would want their child to participate, then that is up to the parent. Mr. Voit said but not through the District after hearing those comments which he felt could be a liability. It is not the time or place to subject Muhlenberg School District students to those kind of people.

Ms. Lupia asked what the difference was between a high school senior and a freshman in college.

Mr. Voit responded a freshman in college has their own latitude and that is up to the college, but while a student is a senior or below here, comes through the jurisdiction of the superintendent. He said if a parent wants their child to participate they may, but he disagreed and he and Ms. Lupia will respectfully disagree.

Dr. Macharola said Mr. Lupia should be very proud of this daughter as he is very proud of her.

2. Amanda and Shawn Wanner, 213 Laurelwood Drive, Douglasville, PA 19518

Mr. and Mrs. Wanner addressed the Board with regards to their son's classroom. Mrs. Wanner said there were issues in the classroom that they would like to address with the Administration.

Mr. Boland requested that the parents speak privately with Dr. Futrick so that FERPA and personnel rights are not violated.

The Board recessed at 7:04 PM for an Executive Session to discuss personnel.

President Hardy resumed the meeting at 7:49 PM.

Board Business

Personnel

1. Request for Leave of Absence/FMLA Leave

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request for a Leave of absence/FMLA leave for the following employees:

- a) Ms. Fiona DeHart, School Psychologist, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about February 14, 2020 through on or about the end of the 2019-2020 returning during the summer to begin preparations for the 2020-2021 school year.
- b) Ms. Jessica Sandoval, Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about December 17, 2019 through on or about February 28, 2020.
- c) Ms. Ewelina McDevitt, 4th Grade Teacher, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about March 23, 2020 through the end of the 2019-2020 school year returning the first contractual day of the 2020-2021 school year.
- d) Ms. Gabrielle Natale, Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Middle School, Leave of Absence/FMLA, effective on or about February 9, 2020 through on or about March 20, 2020.
- e) Mrs. Lisa Ermler, Clerical Assistant, Food Service, effective January 8, 2020 through on or about March 31, 2020.

2. Mentor Assignments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following mentor assignments at the professional rate of \$30.00 per hour for the 2019-2020 school year:

- a) Ms. Gretta Young, mentor for Ms. Ahri Agyapong, Special Education Teacher, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, for thirty (30) hours.
- b) Ms. Virginia Hornberger, mentor for Ms. Jenna Jusits, 4th Grade Teacher, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, for an additional thirty (30) hours.

3. Acceptance of Resignation

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the following resignation:

- a) Mrs. Cheri Garcia, Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, effective December 20, 2019.

4. Co-Curricular Appointments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following co-curricular appointments:

- a) Mr. Kari Allen, Volunteer Junior High Boys Basketball Assistant Coach, effective January 9, 2020.
- b) Ms. Jacklyn Rusnock, Varsity Girls Softball Head Coach (J. Haas), effective January 9, 2020, at a salary of \$4,640 (year one).

5. Aquatics Personnel for the 2019-2020 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following aquatics personnel for the 2019-2020 school year:

- a) Ms. Karin Althouse, Youth Aquatics Coach, at a salary of \$1,300.

6. Professional Appointments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following professional appointments:

- a) Ms. Jenna Jusits, Fourth Grade Teacher (J. Kratzer), C. E. Cole Intermediate School, effective January 9, 2020, at a prorated salary of \$51,146 (M, 18 Steps from the Top).
- b) Ms. Tara Henschel, English Teacher (M. Given), Muhlenberg High School, effective January 20, 2020, at a prorated salary of \$42,832 (B, 18 Steps from the Top).
- c) Ms. Christy Oxenford, 2nd Grade Teacher (Z. McDonough), Muhlenberg Elementary Center, effective January 9, 2020, at a prorated salary of \$45,849 (B, 16 Steps from the Top).
- d) Ms. Meredith Feather, Long-Term Substitute, 2nd Grade (C. Oxenford), effective February 3, 2020 through the end of the 2019-2020 school year, at a prorated salary of \$42,832 (B, 18 Steps from the Top).

7. Completion of Probation

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the completion of probation for the following classified employees:

- a) Ms. Kelly Quiles, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of January 3, 2020, and recommended for permanent employment as of January 6, 2020.
- b) Mr. Nicholas Gehringer, Inside Maintenance Worker, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of January 8, 2020, and recommended for permanent employment as of January 9, 2020.

8. 2019-2020 Bus Monitors for the Second Semester

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following bus monitors for the Second Semester of the 2019-2020 school year, at the pay rate of \$10.50 per hour:

Muhlenberg Elementary Center

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Ms. Lisa Sroka | g) Ms. Candace Katen |
| b) Ms. Michele McCammitt | h) Ms. Annie Renninger |
| c) Ms. Laurie Vlasak | i) Ms. Sarah Kopetsky |
| d) Ms. Jessica Gunter | j) Ms. Kristina Antonellos |
| e) Ms. Katherine Girard | k) Ms. Karly Dahlroos |
| f) Ms. Maria Sterious | l) Ms. Elizabeth McNichol |

C. E. Cole Intermediate School

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a) Mr. William Sellars | f) Ms. Amy Sharp |
| b) Mr. Jeffrey Reiniger | g) Mr. David Angove |
| c) Ms. Megan Migliore | h) Ms. Garielle Ramirez |
| d) Ms. Erin Wentzeli. | i) Ms. Julia Purcell |
| e) Ms. Cristina (Giampietro) Lillis | j) Ms. Laura Zubey |

9. Resignation of Co-Curricular Assignment

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the following co-curricular assignment resignation:

- a) Ms. Susan Bristel, Advisor, Fellowship of Christian Students Club, Muhlenberg High School, effective January 3, 2020.

Management

1. Emergency Disaster Relocation Agreement

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the emergency disaster relocation agreement for Manor Care Health Services to use the Muhlenberg Middle School, 801 Bellevue Avenue, Laureldale, PA 19605 and the Muhlenberg High School, 400 Sharp Avenue, Reading, PA 19605.

Physical Plant and Transportation

1. Sunday Facility Use Request

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following Sunday Facility Use Request:

- a) Muhlenberg Aquatic Group, use of the swimming pool at Muhlenberg High School on the following Sundays: January 12, 2020, January 19, 2020, January 26, 2020, February 9, 2020, February 23, 2020, March 1, 2020, and March 8, 2020 for training exercises and programs from 3:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

Budget and Finance

1. Approval of Financial Reports

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following financial reports and that they become part of the permanent record of the meeting:

Fund	Treasurer's Report	Financial Report	Bills Paid Month	Investments	Budget Transfers
General	Nov 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019 Ck#46927-47080 V#26177-26188 V#82-279127	Nov 2019	
Cafeteria	Nov 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019 Ck#6620-6647 V#2778-2780, 2792	Nov 2019	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Dec 2019	Dec 2019			
Capital Projects Fund (Fund 39)	Dec 2019	Dec 2019	Dec 2019 Ck#1044-1045		
Activity	Nov 2019	Nov 2019			

2. Infinite Campus End User License Agreement

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Infinite Campus End User License Agreement between Infinite Campus, Inc. and the Muhlenberg School District as presented.

3. E-Rate Services

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the agreement between Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit and the Muhlenberg School District for Funding Year 2020 E-Rate Category 1 and Category 2 services in the amount of \$5,300 (funding from the Technology Budget).

4. Act 1 Index for 2020-2021 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District, as in accordance with Act 1 of 2006:

- A. Hereby certifies that it will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the district for the 2020-2021 fiscal year by more than its index as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education - Act 1 Index for 2020-2021 is 2.6% adjusted to 3.6%, at a maximum of 1.1063 mills;

OR

- B. Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District, as in accordance with Act 1 of 2006, provide the Proposed Preliminary Budget for 2020-2021 for public inspection and further, that the district shall pursue the state referendum exceptions.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Voit said he would encourage his colleagues to select "A" which is to keep everything under the Act I Index.

Mr. Nelson said he would agree with that.

Dr. Macharola said the recommendation of the Board is item "A" which certifies that it will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the district for the 2020-2021 fiscal year by more than its index as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education - Act 1 Index for 2020-2021 is 2.6% adjusted to 3.6%, at a maximum of 1.1063 mills;

Education

1. Student Tuition Agreement

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the student tuition agreement with New Story-Kenhorst for the 2019-2020 school year for student #38475 as presented.

2. Admission of Fact, Waiver of Hearing, Acknowledgment of Compliance with Procedural Safeguards and Consent to Expulsion

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the Admission of Fact, Waiver of Hearing, Acknowledgment of Compliance with Procedural Safeguards and Consent to Expulsion for the following student:

- a) Student "F" – Muhlenberg Middle School

3. Student Expulsion

AND NOW, this 8th day of January, 2020, at a regular meeting of the Board of School Directors of Muhlenberg School District, the following Resolution is hereby adopted: BE IT RESOLVED:

1. Ratify the appointment of James E. Mancuso as counsel to the Administration for purposes of conducting an expulsion hearing on December 11, 2019 and ratify the appointment of S. Wayne Hardy, Thomas W. Gross, and Otto W. Voit, III as the School Board Disciplinary Hearing Committee ("Hearing Committee") for this matter; and
2. That the recommendations of the Hearing Committee at the Student Disciplinary Hearing held on December 11, 2019 are hereby accepted in full. Specifically, that the Adjudication in the matter of such student disciplinary action be and is hereby adopted and ratified in all respects as an action of the Board of School Directors of the Muhlenberg School District and that student No. 30154 is hereby expelled from the Muhlenberg School District from November 20, 2019 for the remainder of the 2019-2020 School Year, assigned to alternative education for the remainder of the 2019-2020 School Year and may be readmitted upon the recommendation of the Superintendent for readmission and the satisfactory completion of the terms of the expulsion decision as set forth in the Adjudication which is attached hereto, made a part hereof and incorporated herein by reference.

Student Activities

Minutes

Review minutes of the Annual Organization Meeting, Committee of the Whole Meeting and the Regular Meeting of December 4, 2019.

Old Business

New Business

Mr. Lupia stated that he would like to make a proposal for a resolution to form a committee to oversee the budget process. Mr. Gross said he would second that proposal.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Voit stated that while he believed that his colleagues were well intentioned and he complimented them on their desire to look at the budget in depth; however, in the twenty years that he has been on the Board, the Board has been able to navigate through the process. He said the Board ultimately sets the guidelines informing administration what they want and then it is up to the administration to tell the Board how to get there. Mr. Voit said he did not feel that the Board needed to be in the administration's shorts but if the Board does its fiduciary responsibility and provides the top level of guidance, then that would be sufficient. He said he would like to not start new precedence by forming

subcommittees like other districts have where only a few people are knowledgeable as opposed to the entire Board. Mr. Voit said this Board runs very efficient meetings and if an extra meeting is needed to discuss the budget then so be it. Mr. Voit asked Mr. Lupia to reconsider.

Mr. Hyneman said about a month ago the Reading Eagle published the cost per pupil for every school district in Berks County. The Muhlenberg School District spent the least per pupil than any school district in Berks County. He said so if anyone thinks the District is burning money, it is not. Mr. Hyneman said the Muhlenberg School District spends less per pupil than the Reading School District. He said the article broke everything out – heating, maintenance, etc. Mr. Hyneman said for just instruction, the Muhlenberg School District spent the least per pupil compared to the other districts in the county. The Muhlenberg School District spent less money per pupil on instruction than Reading; so if anyone thinks that this Board is spending money frivolously, he suggested that they check and they will see that the District is way below the state average for the amount of money that is spent per pupil for anything. Mr. Hyneman said to think the Board is spending money frivolously is a myth.

Mr. Hoffmaster said he has been on the Board for twenty-six years and there has never been a subcommittee. He said the Board must trust its administrators. Mr. Hoffmaster said the Board comes to meetings every other Wednesday, so what would anyone on the Board know about budgets. Mr. Hoffmaster said the administrators give the Board the information and that is what the Board knows. The Board does not know how money is spent in each building and the Board does not tell them how to spend. The administration gives the Board the information and the Board tells them how much to cut to reduce the budget. Mr. Hoffmaster said he did not think there should be a committee.

Mr. Hyneman said the Board knows what the District spends – less than everyone in Berks County.

Mr. Voit asked Mr. Lupia to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Lupia withdrew his motion.

Hearing of Visitors

Presentation is limited to approximately two minutes per person. Should any citizen require more than the two minutes allocated, please contact the Superintendent prior to the meeting. He will coordinate such requests for the Board. Citizens addressing the Board should be aware that the meeting is being taped.

1. Mr. John “Butch Imhoff, Temple, Township Commissioner, Chairman of the Muhlenberg Township Authority Board. Mr. Imhoff said he heard that the Board was going to raise taxes and he understood that everyone has bills. He said the Township has not raised the Township taxes for the last five years and for the last five years the Township had a surplus because they have changed the culture. Mr. Imhoff said the first year he served the Police Department requested six or seven new police cars, public works requested six or seven new trucks, new computers – a million dollars’ worth of wants. He said he asked one simple question – does everything the Township

has at the moment still work? The answer to that question was yes. Mr. Imhoff said the Township did not purchase anything that year and the following five years the Township had a surplus. The following five years the Township paved thirty-eight roads. He said that is an example of changing the culture. Mr. Imhoff said Muhlenberg Township is growing and everyone can see it. He said the Fifth Street Highway looks beautiful. The latest ordinance was to eliminate portable signs that people were putting out for sales. Drive down the Fifth Street Highway – it's gorgeous. Mr. Imhoff said they are elevating the Township. He said they are elevating the quality of life in this Township. The Township put new ordinances in place to inspect apartments and rentals. These are things they have never done in all the years he has lived in the Township which was his entire life. Mr. Imhoff said education is the centerpiece of what takes place in the Muhlenberg Township. He said there are actually people who do not want to move into the Muhlenberg Township because they fear their child will not get a good education. Mr. Imhoff said he had a copy on his telephone regarding the Township's status throughout the county – Schuylkill Valley, Oley Valley, Reading, everybody and their brother is better. Muhlenberg is average, below average and he said he was not sure why. He said on Monday the Commissioners held their reorganization meeting and the gentleman who was the liaison to school district no longer wanted to do it so the others asked him if he would do it because he is outspoken. Mr. Imhoff said he served on the Board with Mr. Voit and knows a lot of the other members. He said he was outspoken and he was requesting that the Board hold the line on taxes because people cannot afford to stay in their homes anymore – for one, the elderly and he did not want to lose them. He said they worked hard all their lives for their homes and the things that they own. Mr. Imhoff said perhaps some Board members have jobs that pay real well, but he did not. He said he worked for the Township for the last fifteen years. Mr. Imhoff said he was listening to the discussion regarding a budget subcommittee and heard Dr. Macharola mention that he did not want his staff to be micromanaged. Mr. Imhoff said he absolutely did not want to see anyone get micromanaged and that Dr. Macharola gets paid to do the job of oversight of the whole thing. The principals are paid to oversee their buildings. He said the commissioners do not micromanage the employees of the Muhlenberg Township. The commissioners set policy – they take care of procedure; however, he said the commissioners make sure they check the books and make sure that money is not being spent just to spend money. Mr. Imhoff said he heard Mr. Hyneman say that the District has the lowest expenditure per pupil and that's great, but the District also has average and below average students.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola said he took offense to what Mr. Imhoff said and that he was saying that without having the facts. He said the Muhlenberg School District is the tenth most diverse district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Dr. Macharola asked Dr. Futrick how many children came into the Muhlenberg School District that have had a Muhlenberg education on average less than two or three years. Dr. Futrick replied, a third of the students that go to Muhlenberg High School have been in the District less than twenty-seven months. Dr. Macharola said a third of our students. A better Muhlenberg is being built for the Muhlenberg School District to educate children that have not had the fundamental methodologies given by the District's great teachers at the Elementary School, at Cole Intermediate School and the Middle School. Dr. Macharola said the District's kids are wonderful kids and some of them are coming in

here with special needs and are English Language Learners. Mr. Imhoff said he never said they weren't wonderful kids. Dr. Macharola said the District is hiring people to address a very diverse, multi-cultural community. He said there is no district in this state that has implemented a literacy program, a math program, a science program, invested millions of dollars because they did exactly what Mr. Imhoff said – they didn't do it before. Dr. Macharola said when he came to the Muhlenberg School District, he set-up a plan and the District has engaged in that plan. He said this District is better now than what it would have been had nothing been done. Dr. Macharola said the District has made investments, and the kids here are not average, they are doing everything they can and to get every opportunity necessary. He said the District staff and faculty is one hundred percent behind them. Dr. Macharola said the District has 4,049 kids; 600 kids have come into this District over the last five years, but the District is still operating as if it has 3,500 kids and that is why Muhlenberg is \$200 less than Reading. Dr. Macharola said he had to stand up for his teachers, his staff and for the people that live in the Muhlenberg School District so that they know they are sending their children to the best school system in the state of Pennsylvania. He said no one is more diverse, no one cares more than the people in this District does. Dr. Macharola said they encourage people to move here. He said he gets accused all the time of allowing people to come here from Reading – which is bologna. Mr. Imhoff said no it is not. Dr. Macharola said it is and that anyone enrolled in this District provides the documentation. Mr. Imhoff said that is not true. Dr. Macharola said if it isn't true then he should notify the District. Mr. Imhoff said that is not true and that the Laureldale Police was going to the District and telling people that there are over one hundred students attending school in Muhlenberg from the city. Dr. Macharola said to give the District the facts. Mr. Imhoff said those are the facts. Dr. Macharola said slamming the District does not go any further. Mr. Imhoff said he was not putting the students down or the teachers. Dr. Macharola said he was standing for the District's children and community.

Mr. Imhoff said he understood and he would stand for his staff also; but he was simply saying that the District should look at other ways to save money, to educate and to do the job that much better. He said out in the community where everyone else lives – the swimming pools, the soccer fields, the astro turf stuff – a lot of money is being spent on sports and all these other things. Mr. Imhoff said the District is not training NBA stars, or NFL stars.

Mr. Voit said that was flat out wrong and if Mr. Imhoff knew anything about education – art, music, sports, and academics – are all part of it. He said not one dime of taxes was raised to pay for the athletic fields. Wrap-around financing was done to pay for them, not one dime of taxes and they can be used all-year-round; and the fields are used by the District's AFJROTC along with the soccer team and along with everything else. He said sports, music, art and education - the District will not stop doing that because it is part of a well-rounded student and anybody who understands education, which a lot people don't, this is why the Board relies on the superintendent and the people within the school. Mr. Voit said he doesn't, and Mr. Imhoff doesn't so he should not criticize the District's athletic fields. Mr. Imhoff said he was not criticizing the athletic fields, he was criticizing the money that was being spent.

Mr. Hoffmaster said 98% of this stuff is mandated. The government runs the schools and tells the District what to do. Mr. Imhoff said Tulpehocken has lowered their tax rate three years in a row. Mr. Hoffmaster said school districts and townships are two different things. Mr. Hoffmaster asked Mr. Imhoff if the Township took a bond out to do the roads. Mr. Imhoff said no – for two roads, yes. Mr. Hoffmaster said the District spends its dollars on the students – the administration does a good job – just like the Township people. He said the Board respects the administration. Mr. Imhoff said but it doesn't show in the records. Mr. Hoffmaster said his records do not mean anything and that people say that Muhlenberg is falling apart before they started building here. He said the Board did not go to the Township and complain about the building. Mr. Imhoff said his request is simply this – try to keep the costs down. Mr. Hoffmaster said the Board does, it has to. Mr. Imhoff said every year the taxes go up. Mr. Hoffmaster said the Township has allowed new houses to be built which brings in more kids; and he asked Mr. Imhoff if the Township watches how many kids move into those houses – sometimes there are three or four kids. He said the District must bus them and asked Mr. Imhoff if he knew how much a bus costs. Mr. Imhoff said he had no idea. Mr. Hoffmaster said the Board does not come to the Township to complain about how much it costs to plow the roads or how badly they are plowed. Mr. Imhoff said he is not complaining and that he came to make a request.

Mr. Voit complimented Mr. Lupia for his report as the District's representative at the Muhlenberg Township Meeting. He said that Mr. Lupia did not give his opinion nor was any opinion warranted. As the District's representative, Mr. Lupia is to take what they talked about and, if there are any particular issues, to bring them back to the Board. Mr. Voit complimented Mr. Lupia and he said if Mr. Imhoff is the representative for the Township, although he would say that at this meeting Mr. Imhoff was here personally and not on behalf of the Commissioners, because his job is not to talk on behalf of the Commissioners. Mr. Imhoff said he was there representing himself, but they did talk about it. He said what he would like to do is to build a bridge. Mr. Voit said not the way Mr. Imhoff was talking tonight.

Mr. Hardy requested the Board move on.

MSD/RMCTC Board Visitor of Month

January	Mr. Otto W. Voit, III	April	Mrs. Cindy Mengle
February	Mr. Mark Nelson	May	Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster
March	Mr. Garrett Hyneman		

Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events

January 8	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting; Regular Board Mtg.
January 13	7:00 PM	RMCTC Annual Organization Meeting
February 5	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
February 10	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
February 12	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
March 4	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 9	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
March 11	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
April 1	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting

April 8	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
April 13	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 6	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 11	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 13	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 8	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
June 10	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting; Regular Board Mtg.

Adjourn Meeting

Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Mr. Lupia and Mr. Voit, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Attest:



Thomas W. Gross
Secretary