

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2022
Lecture Hall, Muhlenberg High School
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, April 13, 2022 at 6:29 PM by Board President, Mr. Garrett E. Hyneman.

Members Present

President – Mr. Garrett E. Hyneman
Vice President – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
Treasurer - Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster
Secretary – Mrs. Cindy L. Mengle
Assistant Secretary – Ms. Janet Howard
Member – Mrs. Kristyna Eagle
Member – Mr. J. Tony Lupia, Jr.
Member – Mr. Mark J. Nelson
Member – Mr. Miguel Vasquez
Solicitor – Mr. Brian J. Boland, Esq.
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Tara L. Flowers

Members Absent

Administration Present

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola
Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Alan S. Futrick
Business Manager- Shane M. Mathias, CPA
Director of Physical Plant & Transportation – Mr. Ken Patterson
Director of Special Education – Dr. Shawn Rutt
Supervisor of Accounts – Ms. Susan Hawkins
Supervisor of Special Education – Dr. Nicole Huntbach
Licensed Behavior Specialist – Mr. Zachariah Milch
Director of Technology – Mr. Daniel Houck
Director of Federal Programs – Dr. Cathy Shappell
Director of Food and Nutrition – Mr. Carey Kline
Athletic Director – Dr. Tim Moyer
High School Principal – Mr. Michael Mish
High School Assistant Principal – Ms. Lori Morris
High School Assistant Principal- Mr. Frank Vecchio
Junior High School Principal – Dr. Jeffery Ebert
Elementary Center Principal – Mr. Kyle Crater
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mrs. Ginny Hornberger
Social Worker – Ms. Amanda Foulds
Social Worker – Mrs. Lauren Heydt

Visitors

Jolyn Casper Marc Wolfe
Diane Benson

Dr. Macharola asked everyone to take a moment of silence for the children, men, women and families that are suffering from the ravages of war; from the invasion of Russia into the Ukraine. Dr. Macharola said this will have reverberating consequences for everyone in this room, and especially the children and young adults that the District is educating in this school system; not only here in Muhlenberg, but nationwide. Dr. Macharola asked everyone at this time to take a moment of silence for the welfare of those families, the children, the men, the women and for those lives that have been lost; may God provide a remedy to this colossal horror that everyone is experiencing.

Everyone took a moment of silence.

Dr. Macharola thanked everyone for that moment. Dr. Macharola also wanted to introduce two new employees who were present. Dr. Macharola advised he was very happy to have the two new social workers on board and working in the District, two much needed positions here that are filled and the District will need a couple more. Dr. Macharola introduced Mrs. Lauren Heydt and Ms. Amanda Foulds and he wanted everyone to recognize that the District continues to address the needs of the young adults and children as these two ladies come exceptionally skilled with tremendous backgrounds; and he is very proud to have them in the District.

Dr. Macharola also took a moment to introduce the new Assistant Principal at the High School, Mr. Frank Vecchio.

Educational Presentations

A. Physical Plant Update – Mr. Ken Patterson

Mr. Patterson reported:

- Maintenance and Custodial Staff update – Spring sports here in the District are in full swing, the outside grounds crews have been busy preparing playing fields for the district's student athletes. In addition to these duties, the outside grounds crew have begun grass cutting around the campus. Inside maintenance techs have been working on some internal projects such as IT and lighting around the campus. They are also using the Spring Break time to catch up on some work orders issued for the instructional staff on break. Inside custodians continue to be heavily involved in the activities taking place in all the District's buildings in the evenings and weekends. Inside custodians are also taking advantage of this instructional staff being out of the buildings this week to do some extra cleaning in areas that are tough to maintain when constantly occupied. They also have been instrumental in rearranging the storage areas inside MEC. The custodians continue to clean, disinfect and

sanitize all of the District's facilities following guidelines established over a year ago when students first returned to all of the District's buildings. The will continue to monitor the health and safety recommendations and guidelines being set forth from Governor Wolf, along with federal and state health agencies, and PDE for Muhlenberg School District.

- Muhlenberg School District Administration Office Working Space Short Term Option Update - In November the board approved the short-term solution for the administration working office space to accommodate the hiring of a Director of Human Resources and a Director of Pupil Services. MSD received bids in March for this work, but the District rejected all the bids as the District is redefining the scope of the project and will put them out for bid again. He is hoping to have GC and MC bids ready for approval at the May Board Meeting as the District is still looking for construction to begin in May with significant completion due in July.
- Replacement of School Warning Devices on Kutztown Road- In 2018 Muhlenberg School District had an opportunity to collaborate with Muhlenberg Township on a project to replace the school warning devices on Kutztown Road. A grant to cover the cost was written and submitted, the state awarded those to the township. The township a couple weeks ago, took sealed bids and awarded this project to a signal and lighting company. Completion of this project is scheduled for mid-July.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Hoffmaster questioned since Ms. Cynthia Seaman is retiring, who is a good person, will the District be hiring in-house for this position.

Mr. Patterson advised it depends what the District receives as far as applications.

Mr. Voit commented that he continues to be amazed at just the standard Muhlenberg's team maintains. Mr. Voit talked about with Mr. Paterson's team and Mr. Wolfe's team, the entire time Mr. Voit has been on this Board, it just keeps getting better and better; and it's always the little things that make the facilities great. He advised every time he drives down Bellevue Avenue, 5th Street, the grass always looks good, the mulch is where it's supposed to be, the bushes and trees are maintained. He talked about when he walks into a building it reminds him of running a military buffer back in the day, but with Muhlenberg's team a lot better of course. Mr. Voit congratulated Mr. Patterson and his team as well as Marc Wolfe and his team; they are doing a good job in keeping these facilities top notch.

Mr. Patterson responded he was appreciative of his comment and advised he has an excellent staff and advised everyone to take a look at the nice new "M" signs on the high school as they all stand out very nicely.

Mr. Hyenman stated that he "seconds" Mr. Voit's comments.

Mr. Lupia advised he noticed the concrete work Mr. Patterson's team did there and stated he gave them a "B+". Everyone laughed and Mr. Lupia advised him that he had done a good job.

Dr. Macharola thanked everyone for their comments and stated that he will assure they have a very good replacement for Ms. Cynthia Seaman when that time comes.

B. 2022-2023 Budget Review – Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA

Mr. Mathias spoke about the requirement next month as he wanted to assure all the Board was aware of this requirement. Mr. Mathias advised next month the Board will be asked to approve the proposed final budget requirements, as it is a PDE formality it will set the District up for June. As Dr. Macharola mentioned, there can and there more than likely be changes to the budget and the final budget that is adopted in June. There were a number of changes in revenues and expenditures, however he advised he will not be going over these in detail.

On Page 3a, these are budgetary considerations without new positions; the updated projected deficit of revenues expenditures is now 2.4 million dollars. Looking back at the March report, the estimate was 3.71 million dollars; so the District trimmed about \$740,000 off of that deficit this last month. Again this is just the District updating numbers as new information is coming in. Next month the District will need to adopt a balanced proposed budget. Looking at where the District is right now, using the variables on the sheet the budget will be balanced between 0.75 and 1 mil, which is actually 0.85 mil; which will be needed to balance the budget. A 2.557% increase in the current tax rate. In reiterating some of the variables on the proposed budget, the subsidies between the state, Basic Ed. and the Special Ed. subsidies; the District will not know until the state passes their budget what those numbers are going to be. Two years ago it was level funded, this year the state increased the District's allocation by over 1 million dollars; which is by far the largest increase the District has seen in the last seven years. It is kind of an unknown, obviously if the District received 1 million dollars, it takes 1 million right off the top of the 2.4 million dollar deficit. Something to consider, as he understands the Board needs to make a decision about raising taxes and about using fund balance without that information. The only indication that he has heard is that the state will not level-fund, there will be an increase; however he is unsure how much it will be. In the last seven years, it has been between 0 and, now this year, 1 million dollars. Currently he has \$250,000 on there; however if noted in the allocation back in February, from the proposed budget from Governor Wolf, it was over 3 million dollars which is a highly unlikely increase for Muhlenberg. He believes it was 3.6 between the two subsidies; clearly this would erase the deficit completely but he does not think the Board can count on this. This is a variable that the District will not know until July sometime like it happened to the District this past year. He pointed out that he does have \$250,000, however he feels that this may be a little too conservative, however he is a little apprehensive to increase it by too much.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Voit asked, in the many years they have gone through this, and getting into next month is there anything that he could possibly change or update and any expenses that the District is reducing; this presents a lot of work between May and June to balance the needs of the District and the taxpayers.

Mr. Mathias advised that everyday and every week more and more information is coming in, however there are so many variables at this time with the pandemic. Even though the pandemic is somewhat over, or even temporary, essentially there are so many variables; staffing is the biggest one. The things that everyone is seeing in the newspaper, that staffing shortages and school districts as well as the private sector are experiencing this. Long-term vacancies are creating big variances in the District's budget, last year as well as this year, and the District may see it next year. Mr. Mathias advised as he goes through these numbers to keep in mind these total expenditures are based on staffing as if the District had staffing the prior year, with no vacancies. Mr. Mathias reminded the Board that even in a perfect world that is not going to happen.

Mr. Voit questioned if the 1.2 was from the PSERS. Mr. Mathias responded that this was correct, this was from the assigned PSERS fund balance; using this is not sustainable however the debt services goes away in 2026-27 which allows the District to use savings to balance the budget. Mr. Voit requested at the next meeting, can the Board have choices and decisions, with a wide array of choices with regard to taxes, if Mr. Mathias could put a list together on the District's choices. Because as a Board they will need to agree on a certain amount; choices as what the District would need to "cut out" in order to meet certain levels. Mr. Voit advised everything right now, full level the District is talking about 5% , so 0 to 5% what are their options in terms of the tax rate increase. Mr. Voit talked about expenses that the District can reduce to meet any particular category that's on the current proposed budget sheet. Dr. Macharola and Mr. Mathias agreed to provide this for the Board.

Mr. Hoffmaster asked whether the money the District receives from the government will be taken out and where will the District be sitting moneywise. Mr. Mathias explained with regards to the federal monies the District received that will end in 2024, the District is working to not supplant too much there an use these monies for new school programs and summer programs; but in the grand scheme of things the state funding is 30-some percent total budget and federal is higher right now because of the ESSER money, however generally around 2% of the total budget which is a small piece. The local income and EITs are a much larger piece of the revenue "pie" for the District. Mr. Mathias reiterated the District is not using the federal funds for operational expenditures, however there is a little bit of supplanting but this was really eliminated because of the "cliff" that Dr. Macharola was speaking about, is the District does not want to be in a position where the District is using those funds for operational costs and then all of a sudden it goes away.

Mr. Nelson spoke about the money from the state and the Basic ed. subsidies, and being a little conservative on the \$250,000. Mr. Nelson proposed for next month, hopefully getting more information, at least a scenario where the District is not as

conservative, maybe \$500,000 where the District would have a degree of confidence it could get without going "crazy." Mr. Mathias advised he will take what the "thought" of total monies, and with PASBO being quick in putting out those allocations, and he can then let the Board know how much confidence he has. Mr. Nelson agreed and reiterated with putting something out with some level of confidence, and advised Mr. Mathias was doing the right thing, as he stated like other business managers, without ignoring the possibilities on the "high end." But also doesn't want the District to be too conservative and end up reopening things or putting too much of a tax increase if the District did not have to necessarily. Mr. Mathias understood and agreed.

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. ***This period of time is for comments only; it is not a time to engage in a question and answer or debate with the board. Comments from the Board are at the option of the Board.*** The Board retains the option to accept all public comment at this time. Presentations **will** 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.

There were none.

Board Business

Personnel

1. Acceptance of Resignations

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

- a. Ms. Juli Suarez, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, resignation effective March 25, 2022.
- b. Ms. Karen Collier, 3.0 Hour Cafeteria Worker, C.E. Cole Intermediate, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 8, 2022.
- c. Ms. Mary Gibson, Health Services Technician, C.E. Cole Intermediate, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective end of the 2021-2022 school year.
- d. Ms. Jill Deysher, Special Education Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Junior High School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 8, 2022.
- e. Mrs. Marcey Harman, Elementary Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 9, 2022.
- f. Mr. Patrick Sisk, Social Studies Teacher, Muhlenberg High School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective end of the 2021-2022 school year.
- g. Ms. Joanna Banks, Special Education Instructional Assistant, C.E. Cole Intermediate, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective July 26, 2022.

- h. Ms. Theresa Diaz, Librarian/Gifted Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective end of the 2021-2022 school year.
- i. Ms. Amy Bright, ELL Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective end of the 2021-2022 school year.
- j. Ms. Jennifer McLaughlin, School Counselor, Muhlenberg Junior High School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 16, 2022.
- k. Mr. Michael Allen, Technology Education Teacher, Muhlenberg High School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 9, 2022.
- l. Ms. Judy Becker, Reading Specialist, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective August 24, 2022.
- m. Mrs. Cynthia Seaman, Head Custodian, Blue Center, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective June 30, 2022.

2. Professional Appointments

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

- a. Dr. Lisa Hess, Special Education Teacher (A. Houser), C.E. Cole Intermediate, effective pending release from current employer, at a salary of \$50,717 (B, 14 Steps from the Top), prorated for days worked.
- b. Ms. Amneris Rodriguez, Spanish Teacher (Z. Hudzik), Muhlenberg Junior High School, effective date to be determined, at a salary of \$80,240 (M+21, 5 Steps from the Top), prorated for days worked.
- c. Mr. Robert McGowan, Science Teacher (N. Rohrbach), Muhlenberg Junior High School, effective pending release from current employer, at a salary of \$47,699 (B, 16 Steps from the Top), prorated for days worked.
- d. Mr. Garson Wunderlich, Long-Term Substitute (Newly Created), Muhlenberg Junior High School, effective March 28, 2022 until the end of the 2021-2022 school year, at a salary of \$44,682 (B, 18 Steps from the Top), prorated for days worked.

3. Classified Appointment

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following classified appointment:

- a. Ms. Tiana Perez, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker (J. Suarez), Muhlenberg Elementary Center, effective April 19, 2022, at a pay rate of \$15.23 per hour.

4. Completion of Probation

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

- a. Ms. Randi Farrow, Cafeteria Worker, C. E. Cole Intermediate, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of March 11, 2022 and recommended for permanent employment as of March 14, 2022.
- b. Ms. Brenda Lochman, Cafeteria Worker, Muhlenberg High School, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of March 28, 2022 and recommended for permanent employment as of March 29, 2022.
- c. Ms. Denise Keller, Custodian, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of thirty (30) day probation as of March 11, 2022 and recommended for permanent employment as of March 14, 2022.

5. Co-curricular Resignations

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

- a. Ms. Jessica Hoffman, Varsity Cheer Assistant Coach, effective April 15, 2022.
- b. Ms. Jamie Payne, Varsity Cheer Coach, effective March 29, 2022.
- c. Mr. Wesley Estock, Varsity Girls Basketball Head Coach, effective April 1, 2022.

6. Co-Curricular Appointments

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

- a. Mr. Michael Merkel, Girls Varsity Softball Volunteer Coach, effective April 14, 2022.
- b. Ms. April Shiller Riegel, Girls Varsity Softball Volunteer Coach, effective April 14, 2022.
- c. Ms. Sarenity Wolfe, Aquatics Coach, effective April 14, 2022, at a pay rate of \$7.50 per hour.
- d. Mr. Haniff Skeete, Junior High Baseball Assistant Coach, effective March 15, 2022 at a salary of \$3,263 (year 1).
- e. Mr. Ian Laxton, Junior High Baseball Assistant Coach, effective March 15, 2022 at a salary of \$3,263 (year 1).
- f. Mr. Gaven Urenko, Boys Varsity Lacrosse Volunteer Coach, effective April 14, 2022.

7. Bus Monitors for the 2021-2022 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following bus monitors for the 2021-2022 school year at the pay rate of \$10.50 per hour:

Muhlenberg Junior High School-AM
Ms. Kerri Anderson

8. Job Descriptions

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following revised job descriptions as submitted.

- a. Director of Physical Plant
- b. Data Administrator
- c. Paraprofessional
- d. Special Education Paraprofessional

Management

1. Adoptions of Policy

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District adopt the following district policy:

600 Finances

Policy No. 609, Investment of District Funds

Physical Plant and Transportation

There are no items.

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	Feb 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022 Ck#51816-52018 V#27229-27275	Feb 2022	Feb 2022
Cafeteria	Feb 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022 Ck#7408-7442 V#2937-2944	Feb 2022	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Mar 2022	Mar 2022			
Capital Projects Fund (Fund 39)	Mar 2022	Mar 2022			
Activity	Feb 2022	Feb 2022			

2. Disposal of Surplus Property

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the disposal of the following surplus property in accordance with district Policy 706.1, Disposal of Surplus Property as presented.

- a. Chromebooks/Laptops/Desktops for Disposal – These items are broken or are of no value to the District and have had usable parts removed. (Exhibit – April 22 Chromebook Recycle.xlsx Exhibit).

3. Student Activity Account

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize establishing the student activity account for the C.E. Cole Intermediate Student Council School Store.

Education

1. Certificate of Support Students

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the enrollment of Certificate of Support Students, PA School Code 1302, for the 2021-2022 school year as listed.

2. Acceptance of Gifts, Grants, Donations

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District accept the following donation in accordance with district Policy 702, Gifts, Grants, Donations:

- a. Restaurant Store, donation of numerous variety of food products for Family and Consumer Science classes at Muhlenberg Junior High School.
- b. The Giant Company, 2022 Feeding School Kids Register Round Up Program, donation of \$6,612.63 for the students in Muhlenberg School District.

3. 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, Acknowledgement of Compliance with Procedural Safeguards and Consent to Expulsion for the following students:

- a. Student "R", Muhlenberg Junior High School
- b. Student "S", C.E. Cole Intermediate
- c. Student "T", Muhlenberg High School

4. Students to Complete the 2021-2022 School Year as a Non-Resident Student

Resolved, Muhlenberg School District approve the request for the following students to complete the 2021-2022 school year as non-resident student:

- a. Student #36867, 5th Grade, C.E. Cole Intermediate
- b. Student #35447, 12th grade, Muhlenberg High School
- c. Student #35446, 9th grade, Muhlenberg Junior High School
- d. Student #37833, 2nd grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center
- e. Student #38586, 1st grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center

5. Dual Enrollment Agreement with Reading Area Community College for the 2022-2023 Academic Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Dual Enrollment Agreement with Reading Area Community College for the 2022-2023 Academic Year at a student tuition rate of \$99.00 per credit.

6. Community Eligibility Provision

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the district enrollment into the Community Eligibility Provision, which will allow continued free meal services to all students K-12 in the Muhlenberg School District.

7. Educational Field Trip Requests

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the following educational field trip requests:

- a. Muhlenberg High School PA Invention Convention students, travel to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan on May 30, 2022 through June 4, 2022.
- b. Muhlenberg High School student delegate and instructor, travel to the 60th National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium in Albuquerque, New Mexico on April 20, 2022 through April 23, 2022.

8. Extended School Year Program

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Extended School Year Program for 2022 (July 5, 2022 to July 28, 2022, ESY) at an estimated operating cost for the programs of \$167,737 plus transportation and contracted services which includes the following staff (Special Education Fund and Grant Funding):

- a. One (1) ESY Coordinator
- b. Twenty (20) Teachers
- c. Twenty-five (25) Assistants

- d. Two (2) Speech Therapists
- e. Related Services:
 - 1) Occupational Therapist
 - 2) Physical Therapist
 - 3) Hearing
 - 4) Vision Support

9. Kutztown University Reading Specialist Interns for 2022-2023 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve Ms. Aimee Loessl and Ms. Serenah Connelly, reading specialist interns from Kutztown University for the 2022-2023 school year, as per the agreement between the Muhlenberg School District and Kutztown University.

Student Activities

There are no items

Minutes

Review minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 9, 2022 and the Regular Board Meeting of March 9, 2022.

Old Business

Dr. Macharola discussed the items on the agenda that were struck, were items of the RMCTC, having to do with the welding project building that Muhlenberg students and the Reading School District students will engage in once it is built. Dr. Macharola explained the financing was once piece that was a major heartburn and concern to the District's solicitors and for the two districts it was the avenue and pathway as to how that financing was taking place. Dr. Macharola advised the number two reason was the authority, the authority that exists expired.; it's a fifty-year authority and it expired which is requiring the solicitors to do a little work on top of that. What was supposed to be on this month, will be next month providing the "financial peace" to this is drawn out, vetted, the interest rate is really good, it is a 2.84 percent interest rate, but the methodology of how the District was acquiring that was not good and need to be "ironed out." The District will have two million dollars, which the district is going to be looking at as part of the obligation and the same with the Reading School District too, as with this project.

Mr. Boland discussed the background on how this came about, since the CTCs are generally not able to take on debt in their own name, what they need to do is the municipal authorities are able to take on debt. So a CTC can go to a municipality, they will act as a conduit for taking on that debt, for a building project like this. Mr. Boland advised they had talked to Center Township municipal authority and they initially sort of preliminarily agreed to the idea, acting as their debt conduit for the project pending how this deal would come together. Ultimately what came together and was presented to them, didn't really work out because, in short, the way it was structured was the

municipal authority would take on the debt for the project, and in exchange the CTC would give a lease for the building to the authority, but the authority would then turn back around and sublease the building back to the CTC to have to lease the building to the authority, the authority subleases back to the CTC. There are two problems with this from Center Township's perspective; one was that it was more complicated of a deal than they were anticipating, and the second is that they had concerns about liability. So they take the position that they have a building and they are leasing this building. The question is if students would become injured in this building do they have some kind of liability or get sued, and the answer is maybe. The problem is this isn't a couple of years where they can say it probably won't happen and won't get sued, they can't hold their breath a little bit and hope nothing happens; this is a twenty year term; twenty years they could potentially have that liability and it wasn't something they were able to "stomach" and he thinks ultimately the deal ended up being a little more complicated when it initially intended. The other idea and he thinks what the municipal authority was thinking of was when they sort of agreed to take this on, was the idea that they can take on the debt and then there would just be a Note essentially the CTC would eventually pay them back in increments over twenty years to pay off the debt. Unfortunately when going to the bank, the bank was not willing to do it that way. For whatever reason when the agreement is set up as a lease, the state intercept is triggered and so in the event that we weren't able to pay the debt, the state could then, as it happens, withhold the District funds in order to pay off their debt so the state is sort of guaranteeing that money. If it was restructured as just a Note, just to pay back the debt, the state intercept is a trigger and the bank said "I'm sorry" they are not willing to do this deal unless the intercept is in place. The remaining option, as Dr. Macharola had indicated that Reading and Muhlenberg just take on the debt as their own, their perspective 2.3 million dollars in order to just build the building that way.

Mr. Voit asked that this would be through reinstating the authority. Mr. Boland advised it would not have to be through the authority. Dr. Macharola advised there was an issue with the authority in terms of its expiration. Mr. Boland advised the authority is sort of does not exist anymore; these authorities have fifty-year lives they are renewed, and for whatever reason and not sure whose watch that is, but the authority was never renewed so it sort of in a way does not exist. They can go about renewing that authority, recreating that authority but this will probably take longer woot he process that will be needed in order to build this project.

Mr. Voit asked for an explanation on how the debt would be split between Reading and Muhlenberg. Mr. Boland advised what they would do, as it was initially proposed the deal was going to go through, was that state taxation equalization when it comes up with The District's market value calculation according to the total property market value of the district, and actually as it came up they are extremely similar. Mr. Boland advised Muhlenberg was something like 49.5 and Reading would be 50.5 and so there's just a scheduling and the District would pay the District's perspective amount which is how that would be divided.

Mr. Voit asked who is signing for the debt. Mr. Boland advised there would be two options; Muhlenberg and Reading can own the debt or could try and find another suitor

by way of another authority. Mr. Voit advised that he is not interested in the District sharing debt with Reading on the same Note. If the District goes through a municipal authority, he's all in favor of this. Mr. Voit talked about a lot of the Board members being there for some time, and he believes everyone else shows the same view; the District has started finances here at every single pay, there was a "hiccup" now and then. Working through the PSERS, the District manages the District's finances well. He spoke about saying the same thing if it were Tulpehocken or any other school district, through a municipal or through something else, fine; if the District has its own debt and the District takes half and is responsible for it, and they take half and they are responsible for it, the fine. Mr. Voit advised he does not want to co-sign anything with another school district. Mr. Boland agreed.

Mr. Hoffmaster advised Dr. Macharola brought this up at the RMCTC board meeting with regards to the District being by itself and managing the District's own money.

Mr. Voit commented that they are all on the same page which is why the District is in a strong financial position.

Mr. Lupia asked if there was going to be a delay as far as groundbreaking with this. Mr. Boland responded maybe; it depends on how long it takes to put the deal together, but he cannot say. Mr. Lupia advised it would be a real shame if that were to happen, as this is a great opportunity. The CTC is coming back now, and people want to be trained for these jobs. Mr. Hoffmaster commented that the District has to look out for itself as well, this is why there is a legal team to assist. Mr. Lupia advised he believes it is a little bit of paranoia.

Dr. Macharola advised they will continue to keep an eye on this as they have been. Mr. Voit commented that the District has one of the highest bond rating and credit rating, probably the highest if not "the" highest rating in Berks County, so if the District separates, is there a chance of different interest rates because of the District's better credit rating. Mr. Boland advised he was not sure and would need to look into it. Mr. Voit also discussed if the District takes on the debt at its lower rate, and then the District charges Reading their normal rate, then the surplus goes to administration fees, then he would be okay with this too. Dr. Macharola advised he did not want the District's bond rating affected by this.

Mr. Hoffmaster asked if Reading would get a cheaper interest rate for being a city school. Mr. Mathias advised he was unsure.

Mr. Voit asked who was taking the lead as in the District's finance consultant. Mr. Mathias responded; PFM.

New Business

1. Memoriam of Mrs. Roberta Harbach

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mrs. Roberta Harbach who served in the Muhlenberg School District for twenty-five (25) years (1970-1995) as an English teacher. We honor her memory for her dedicated service to the school district and community.

Be it further resolved that we convey through this resolution our deepest sympathy to her family, and that this resolution be made part of the permanent record in the minutes of the Muhlenberg School District.

2. Memoriam of Mrs. Shirley M. Youse

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mrs. Shirley M. Youse who served in the Muhlenberg School District for nine (9) years (1957-1966) as a 4th Grade teacher. We honor her memory for her dedicated service to the school district and community.

Be it further resolved that we convey through this resolution our deepest sympathy to her family, and that this resolution be made part of the permanent record in the minutes of the Muhlenberg School District.

Questions/Comments/Concerns

Mr. Nelson talked about approving a lot of resignations for the purpose of retirement. Mr. Nelson asked what the District is doing to solve the District's portion of the issue with retaining teachers. Mr. Nelson discussed the current issue with his current employer. In the past they could post an opening and get a hundred applications, but that's not working anymore. Mr. Nelson advised doing something different and asked what the District is doing differently, is the District considering moving coaches back into the classroom, are there support teachers that maybe the thing to do is move them back in until the District finds replacements.

Mr. Hyneman discussed the problem, not having to do anything with COVID. Going back to 2000 and now going to 2020, the number of people coming out of colleges to become a teacher has decreased by sixty percent. Mr. Hyneman advised they are not out there. Mr. Hyneman discussed attending a U.S. Air retired crew party, he sat with some of the pilots. They have the same problem getting pilots as the District has getting teachers. They have the same problem getting nurses. We have a labor force that's coming out without skills and without education beyond high school. This goes right to Mr. Lupia's point, the vo tech school, those particular trades are "screaming" for people to train, and they are good jobs. They not only make a good living, but they don't have any student debt, but the District has to have the facilities to take care of them. Mr. Hyneman advised he shared the same concern as Mr. Lupia, however, does not want the District to have a bad bond rating through this process, so they need to look at both issues there. Mr. Hyneman discussed the issues with getting teachers and how the pilots solved this the District cannot do. They new pilots received higher pay, however Mr. Hyneman advised the District cannot afford to do this; pilots are making what three superintendents make.

Dr. Macharola talked about the District becoming very "aggressive" the past couple of years. The District has sent teams out into the universities to promote the Muhlenberg School District. Dr. Macharola explained the District has to do a better job in terms of the District's public relations, in using multiple avenues to reach a very lean pool; and market the Muhlenberg School District as a place to be, a place to come and a place to work. The District is entering into partnerships with our local universities, opening other doors that have never ever been entertained in this District before, and this is why you want to come and work in school districts in the state of Pennsylvania and the riches of working here. The nine board members here also have to be beacons of a good message about this District. The District is still dealing with things that are not necessarily accurate, and are not the best reflection of the good community that the District is. Dr. Macharola discussed that he is dealing with this firsthand in many capacities as he sits on two boards; and on those boards he acts as a conduit to helping some of the universities understand why they are not attracting quality students that want to stay here and teach. Dr. Macharola advised the District is competing with other districts, where the image is where is the place to be. Dr. Macharola stated he always said this, "if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys." Dr. Macharola talked about the District remaining competitive with regards to the salaries, however the District does get turned down on job applications because this District gets outbid; the District does not offer incentives as this is a really risky slope. Dr. Macharola discussed the District's image as critically important, as the District needs to navigate as we are opening up the doors of our LinkedIn, using Indeed as another pathway to get out. Dr. Macharola discussed engaging with the local universities and in speaking with them, this District is the most aggressive district. Dr. Macharola spoke about the District's programs working here, as this pertains to staffing, and responsibility of leadership and that is making sure whatever investments the District puts out, pays off. Dr. Macharola advised the District has been very fortunate here in Muhlenberg School district and that just a short time ago this district was 35% minority, 33% economically disadvantaged; this District is now 72% minority and 68% economically disadvantaged and the District addressed the flux of nearly 700 students. Those students that have come in are either students that are English Language Learners or they are students that have intellectual disabilities. Had this Board not "bought in" to the Blueprint for Success in 2014 which put this District on a path, the District invested millions of dollars in technology and invested millions of dollars into the District's programs. The District's programs would have failed had it not been for instructional coaching. Districts that have bought into programs, and why the District's programs have been successful here, because every year when the District started out with the Literacy program had the District not had coaches in there working with the teachers, it would have never gotten off the ground. It would have been a miserable failure, not only would it have been a waste of money here for the school district, but noted as another district that just bought something and didn't do anything meaningful with it. The District invested in literacy, math, science, probably the most critical one recently is the District's mental health program K-12. The District has new teachers coming out from school, the District has some veterans here, and an array of abilities in how they instruct from a methodological standpoint, and they need help. This is why the District's programs succeeded. The District is looking at piloting another literacy program critical in six years; however, it will fail here if the District does not have coaches. However if he needed to put those instructional coaches in those

classrooms, then that's what the District is going to have to do, as Dr. Futrick knows this; but he also does not want this to happen. He doesn't want a massive failure to the 4,150 kids here. This is reality, the District has really good teachers but they need help, and everyone needs help. Yes, there are options but he won't forsake what he thinks is the best piece to this and that is to provide those services for the District's faculty, 285 faculty members and the 53 paraprofessionals as the District continues to navigate. Dr. Macharola discussed recently having the opportunity to engage with seventy other Superintendents from across the country. He advised he came back with one thing, well many things, that the District has done more here instructionally with the teachers, in social-emotional mental health ; probably the only school district in the state of Pennsylvania that has successfully piloted four programs and accurately bonafide numbers improved the District's school system that resulted in a U.S. News and World Report school. None of that could not possibly happen if the District did not have those instructional coaches. He explained that he does not want to sacrifice one piece to it, to solve another; if he needs to he will. He stated that this District has done more for its teachers and its staff than he is going to say 99 percent of districts across the country. He advised this has brought "peace" to him and he discussed his thanks to this Board here right now. Dr. Macharola advised all of the strategies that the District is using to recruit, this district is an urban school district and has challenges. Dr. Macharola discussed not being happy with what is coming out of higher ed right now, and is concerned there is a cheapening of the teacher programs, he's not happy with what he sees coming out with administration and he has a great concern for staffing, not only here , but across the board for where the District is going to be in the future.

Mr. Nelson advised he understands the importance of the coaches, however he is looking at it from the "big picture." He advised he is well aware of being down 66% from ten years ago when teachers are graduating. Mr. Nelson discussed if you are coming out with a teaching degree, then good for you because they are going to have their pick of jobs in the county and even the state, wherever they want to live. Mr. Nelson agreed with the salaries and the starting salaries and how it is distributed in the teacher's scale. Mr. Nelson discussed the previous proposal for retention bonuses and advised maybe this is something that needs to be addressed again. He doesn't believe giving hiring bonuses to the new teachers is the thing to do.

Dr. Macharola discussed being a "beacon of light," as negativity does no one any good.

Mrs. Eagle commented, as she has mentioned previously, everyone needs to be encouraging students to want to get into education. Currently all they are hearing is what a terrible profession it is, they are not finding the positive and everyone needs to "flip" that around. Mrs. Eagle discussed the need to get the kids to the point where they want to be teachers. Mrs. Eagle spoke about teachers that they know are saying negative things, and the need to be positive. Mr. Hoffmaster agreed with Mrs. Eagle, he talked about the need to take education back.

Mr. Lupia discussed it not being as simple as Mr. Nelson was saying, and going to Kutztown for four years and then being out. Today if you want to be a teacher you need more, more post-graduate education and it is a lot more expensive too. He advised he

does not believe that people are enthusiastic about becoming a teacher. Mrs. Eagle mentioned that it is so easy to do the post-graduate work as it was harder before when coming out of school. It is so easy for them now as they can sit in front of the computer to get those credits done. Mr. Lupia rescinded Mrs. Eagle would know better and agreed with her.

Dr. Futrick shared some positive insight as he talked about the students coming in to work for the Summer Style program as this is a great "pipeline" for the District to get a look at kids that are in education, that want to work with Muhlenberg students, and can see them in the summertime, can see them over a course of a few years to actually identify them and wanting to hire them. He advised today, Dr. Shappell had 75 college students in education that have already put in that they would like to work here in the summer. Dr. Futrick advised they need to cut this number down to about 35 college students, so there are 40 kids that the District is not going to be able to pick up in the summertime, but the nice thing is there are a lot of Muhlenberg graduates that want to come back and become teachers. He really attributes this to the District's staff, for the District's administrators, and really "selling" education. Dr. Futrick spoke about seeing the college students working with the District's students, he believes they see that the District has energy, has a lot of enthusiasm, and they want to be a part of a winning team. He stated the future is bright, there are some positions where the District is tough to find someone in Speech or sometimes Special Education; but in elementary education that shouldn't be that difficult. Other content areas are not that difficult to find, but the District does have a great "pipeline" going. Dr. Futrick also shared some adjustments that were made back in December, the District increased its pay for substitute teachers; the District went from two substitutes a day and now are up to twelve now. He advised the building administrators to feel a hundred times better now that they have to do coverages knowing that we have people here; the District hired building substitutes in each one of the District's buildings, not all filled yet however it is some of the secondary positions where the District is struggling to find. Dr. Futrick advised huge strides have been made and he believes that it is very positive that the people that do work with the District's kids, they see the District's staff loves working with them; there is hope.

Mr. Hyneman commented that this is not a totally new problem, because in the 80's and 90's he was the person the Reading School District sent to job fairs. He explained he was at all of the colleges and he can remember people walking past his stand and he finally said to one of the professors, is it something he said. He advised the professor responded no, they realize that industry can pay more and even then sometimes it was a problem getting people into education. He went on to speak about it not being a totally new problem, however it might be worse.

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.

There were none.

MSD/RMCTC Board Visitor of the Month

Schedule 2021-2022

April Mrs. Cindy Mengle
May Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster

Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events

April 11	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
April 13	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
May 4	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 9	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 11	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 13	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
June 15	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting

Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Nelson, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Attest:


Cindy L. Mengle
Secretary