

MUHLENBERG SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2021
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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, February 10, 2021 at 6:32 PM by Board President, Mr. S. Wayne Hardy via remote access using Zoom.

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. Mark J. Nelson
Member – Mr. Otto W. Voit, III
Solicitor – Mr. Brian F. Boland, Esq.
Recording Secretary – Mrs. Patricia L. Law

Members Absent

Member – Mr. Randall R. Madara (Ill)

Administration Present

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph E. Macharola
Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Alan S. Futrick
Business Manager – Mr. Shane M. Mathias, CPA
Director of Physical Plant and Transportation – Mr. Ken Patterson
Director of Special Education – Dr. Shawn Rutt
Supervisor of Special Education – Dr. Tyler Herman
Behavior Analyst – Mr. Zachary Milch
Director of Technology – Mr. Daniel Houck
Director of Federal Programs – Mrs. Cathy Shappell
Director of Food and Nutrition – Mr. Carey Kline
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 – Dr. Jeffery Ebert
Middle School Assistant Principal – Dr. Felicia Gonzalez
Intermediate School Principal – Mr. Steve Baylor
Elementary Center Principal – Mr. Kyle Crater
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mrs. Ginny Hornberger
Elementary Center Assistant Principal – Mrs. Shannon O'Donnell

Visitors (*Note: This is who appeared to be attending via Zoom and may not include everyone*)

Amanda Gring	Don Kline	Cathy Salesky	Brian J. Boland
Linda Figueroa	April Kreiser	Holly Allen	Stephanie Jablonski
Jen Doyle	Jennifer Rahn	Jolyn Casper	Kristen Bagenstose
Julie Roth	Kathi Wolfe	Dan Fair	Lindsay Deysher
Cary Rowe	Tim Goodhart	Hao Duong	Sharon Kile
Theresa Fidler	Jill McIntyre	Josue Tinoco	Heather Rios
Jay Seyler	Penny Vojtasek	Laurie Vlasak	Amanda Gring
Michael Althouse	Karen Althouse	Leslie Corley	Kim Velazquez
Melanie LaFaver	Sara Patton	Jamie Shipe	Leila Meisinger
Brent Hafer	Liz Hafer	LaTara Nguyen	Mrs. Moser
Toni Crater	Shannon Logan	Amy Rohrbaugh	Michelle Djevharian
Adam Miron	Lindsey Seelig	Jennifer Wenzel	Fram Wesoloskie Havens
Jodie Tolomei	Donna Marburger	Lisa Chlebowski	Samantha Gantz
Colin Gehr	Carolina Ramos	Madeline Corson	Cathy Liszcz
Becky Achey	Stacey Carmello	Andrea Stern	Kelly Burr
Tonya Spiers	Ben Shreve	Chad Thiele	Jen Wilson
Patricia Keiper	Shana Kelly	G. Smith	Sherry Hinnershitz
Breanna Hafer	Jennifer Wyland	Erika Watson	Heather Rosenberry
Kelly Bohn	Kay Adams	Angie Szczecina	

Educational Presentations

A. Physical Plant Update - Mr. Kenneth Patterson

Mr. Patterson reported:

- Maintenance and Custodial Staff continue to keep the buildings and grounds operational for staff members and for athletic practices and games. This became quite challenging with the twenty-eight inches of snow that fell on the District February 1st and February 2nd.; however, the entire support services staff did a great job removing snow around the campus and sidewalks along Sharp Avenue, Kutztown Road, Bellevue Avenue and Kent Avenue. Winter sports activities continue to be in full swing within the facilities. Any facilities used by student athletes and coaching staffs are cleaned and disinfected after every use as well as in between use for facilities used for different sports. Staff member areas and common areas are sanitized daily. Mr. Patterson continues to monitor the guidelines being set forth by the federal and state health agencies and from PDE and the Muhlenberg School District. Both crews, maintenance and custodial, continue to do a great job to maintain the facilities.
- As part of the meritorious Safety and Security grant award received in the 2019-2020 school year, additional security cameras for the exterior of the campus were approved. Twenty additional cameras will be installed across the entire campus to provide better overall coverage of all of the buildings, playing surfaces and walking paths. Installation should begin and continue over the course of the next few months.

- Included on the agenda is a request to proceed with construction documents and bid solicitation for repaving of the high school parking lots and part of the elementary center's main drive and to re-lamp MHS parking lot with LED fixtures. The asphalt in those areas is beyond repairing and sealing; and, they should be replaced.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Lupia asked if Mr. Patterson was taking open bids from anybody or just the one bid that was received. Mr. Patterson said, if approved, there would be a formal bid process including advertising for bids. Mr. Lupia said he noticed that Muhlenberg-Greene would be involved and asked what that is about. Mr. Patterson said that Muhlenberg-Greene would be retained to develop construction documents, bid packages and be a part of managing the project if the project is approved. Mr. Lupia asked why the District requires having Muhlenberg-Greene for bids on a parking lot. He said a paving firm could come out and summarize the bid so why are the services of a third party like Muhlenberg-Greene needed. Mr. Patterson replied it is protection for the District. When a formal bid package goes out there would be no dispute about the type of work that is going to be done; if something arises, the District can go right to the bid packet. There would be no haggling or arguing because it is right there in black and white. Muhlenberg-Greene has done similar packages. Conrad Weiser just had most of their lots repaved this summer and they used MGA. Mr. Lupia said he just helped Holy Guardian Angels (HGA) with a bid on their parking lot and there was no need for an architect. They planned everything and wrote everything down and it was signed by the people at HGA and the paving people. A third party was not needed there and there were no problems. Mr. Boland said under Section 751 of the School Code, anything in excess of \$22,300 and \$25,000 is subject to prevailing wage; therefore, the District must bid and is subject to prevailing wage. Under prevailing wage, part of the architect's responsibilities will be to prepare specifications so that all of the bidders are bidding on the same thing and then that package is put out to bid. Then when the bids come in, the architect will review them to be sure that all of the specification have been met; have bid bonds, performance bonds, payment bonds all in place, and preparation of the contract the District would enter into. He said unlike HGA, who can enter into a private contract and can ask for two or three companies to come in and tell them generally what they will do, the District is stuck with requirements under the School Code to send out bids and have the specs prepared so that everyone is on the same playing field. Mr. Lupia asked if that required an architectural firm. Mr. Boland replied, yes, either an architectural firm or an engineering firm to prepare the bid specs; otherwise, it is challenging if the District just says it wants the parking lots repaved. He said four different people might come in and provide three different answers as to how to make the repairs. Mr. Boland said it would be difficult to compare the bids if each contractor is going to do something different and costs would be all over the place. It would be very difficult to compare. Mr. Lupia said there is a reputable firm, Donny Folk, who's been around for years. They went through all of the specs and what "i's" to dot and what "t's" to cross. He said the District always has to pay someone else to write up a plan. Mr. Lupia said the District is spending a lot of money. Mr. Boland said the District must also pay prevailing wage that HGA would not be required to pay. He said it is unfortunately some of the requirements public schools must follow. Mr. Boland said the District must award the project to the lowest responsible bidder. He said it is part of the fairness

and it is also part of the difficulty. Mr. Lupia agreed. He said the District had to take the lowest bid for the roof. He said he looked at the roof and saw that it is not very neat. Mr. Lupia said he is sure they did a complete job, but it was very sloppy. He said he is not a roofer, but that is not necessary to see what kind of job they did. Mr. Lupia said it is sad the District must take the lowest bid because then it will get the lowest quality work. Mr. Voit said he cautioned Mr. Lupia about how he talks about vendors the District used because it could be subject to a lawsuit by saying their work was low quality.

Mr. Voit asked Mr. Patterson if he had any idea how much the paving would cost - \$750,000 - would it cost that much. Mr. Patterson said no, but he would be happy to talk to Mr. Voit about it offline as he did not want to discuss potential costs before the project went out for bid. Mr. Patterson said he knows what some other districts have paid recently. Mr. Voit said he was concerned because the District did not know how much money would be coming in, how much extra or where it will stand. He said he asked last month to delay any projects that did not have to be done; although, this one may be needed, but maybe this is not the time. Mr. Voit said his option is to vote no and to encourage the Board to wait a month until the District gets the confidential estimate of a cost so the Board knows whether the District can afford to do this project. He said hopefully it will not come up for a vote and if it does, he would suggest an amendment to table it for another month. Mr. Patterson said that he discussed the cost of projects with Mr. Mathias and he did not suggest holding off on a couple of things he would like to get done this summer and for the 2020-2021 school year. He said the cost will not be a lot of money but he did not want to put a figure out there. Mr. Lupia said the high school parking lot is shot and has re-occurring potholes. Mr. Nelson said that the Board needed to remember that they would only be approving the bid proposal package. He said they would not be approving the actual job. When the bids come in and the Board would decide it was not fiscally possible, the Board can vote no on the project at that point. Mr. Nelson said he agreed with Mr. Lupia - the parking lot is a disaster waiting to happen. Mr. Patterson said the Board could reject all of the bids if they did not want to move forward. Mr. Voit said then why spend \$26,000 without knowing what the cost of the project would be. He said that was just his opinion. If the Board would be willing to delay a month, that would be great; if not, he would vote no and move on. Mr. Patterson said the \$26,000 is cost is for the entire project from start to finish. It is not just the cost to prepare the documents. He said that is the cost to run the project as well. Mr. Patterson said if the Board would decide not to move forward with the project MGA would not receive the full \$26,000. Mr. Voit said Mr. Patterson was doing a great job letting the Board know what the District needed, but the Board does not know where it stood financially so he was suggesting that the District not spend a dime until they have a rough idea about the project and the finances. Mr. Lupia said he did not know the logistics of why the District needed a third party, but Mr. Patterson and Mr. Boland explained it well.

Mr. Hoffmaster said he attended a couple of sporting events and the custodial staff did a great job cleaning after the events. He said everyone is following the rules - wearing masks and social distancing.

Mr. Mathias said in the Treasurer's Report, the paving project is part of the Five-Year Plan, with a value assessed. If that value is close to what Mr. Patterson was thinking, Board members would have that information in front of them and that may help them make a decision. Mr. Patterson said that is a good ballpark figure.

Dr. Macharola said he was the one that gave the green light for that project to be included on the agenda. He said that parking lot needed to be done and he supported Mr. Patterson and Mr. Mathias fully. He encouraged the Board to get this project done at one point or another.

B. First Reading of Policy No. 146.1, Trauma-Informed Approach - Dr. Joseph E. Macharola

The new policy guide on trauma-informed approach incorporates the elements of School Code section 24 P.S. 1311-B, which required the state's School Safety and Security Committee to develop a model trauma-informed approach plan that must be used by a school entity who applies for School Safety and Security grant funding related to trauma-informed approach. The policy guide directs school staff to develop a trauma-informed approach plan for implementation and may be used to guide the elements of the plan that are most important based on local decisions and resources. Boards may choose to adopt the policy for this trauma-informed approach.

While the policy is optional, there are two required elements related to training on trauma-informed approach: the requirement for one (1) hour of training on trauma-informed approach for newly elected/appointed and re-elected/appointed school directors, and the requirement for one (1) hour of trauma-informed approach training to be included in the Professional Development Plan is also addressed in Policy 333.

Training of other staff and contracted individuals working in the schools, including school security personnel, is optional but strongly recommended for a comprehensive approach to integrating trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school entity.

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.

There were none.

Board Business

Personnel

1. 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 2020-2021 school year:

- a. Mrs. Linda Grace, mentor for Mrs. Suleil Ramirez, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for thirty (30) hours.
- b. Mr. Chris Geddio, mentor for Mrs. Taylor Brennan, Long-Term Substitute, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for thirty (30) hours.
- c. Mrs. Marcey Harman, mentor for Ms. Beverly Witte-Mech, Long-Term Substitute, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for fourteen (14) hours.
- d. Ms. Laurie Vlasak, mentor for Ms. Michelle Lawlor, Long-Term Substitute, Kindergarten, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, for sixty (60) hours.

2. Request to Extend Leave of Absence/FMLA Leave

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request to extend the Leave of Absence/FMLA leave for the following employee:

- a. Mrs. Erin Antosy, Third Grade Teacher, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, extend Leave of Absence/FMLA to on or about May 3, 2021.

3. Professional Appointment

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

- a. Ms. Jade Fagley, Long-Term Substitute, Third Grade, Muhlenberg Elementary Center (E. Antosy), extend current LTS assignment to on or about April 30, 2021, at a prorated salary of \$42,932 (B, 18 Steps from the Top).

4. Completion of Probation

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

- a. Ms. Priscilla Figueroa, Instructional Assistant, Muhlenberg Elementary Center, completion of forty-five (45) day probation as of January 25, 2021 and recommended for permanent employment as of January 26, 2021.

5. Spring 2021 Coaching Assignments

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Spring Coaching Assignments for the 2020-2021 school year as submitted.

6. Sports Event Monitors for the 2020-2021 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Sports Event Monitors for the 2020-2021 School Year at the pay rate of \$10.50 per hour as presented.

7. Co-Curricular Appointment

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

- a. Ms. Catherine Rauenzahn, Varsity Field Hockey Head Coach (L. Yoder), at a salary of 4,350 (year 1).

8. Acceptance of Resignations

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

- a. Mrs. Denise Rapp, Class A Secretary, Physical Plant and Transportation, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective April 6, 2021.
- b. Ms. Karen A. Snyder, Fifth Grade Teacher, C. E. Cole Intermediate School, resignation for the purpose of retirement, effective at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

9. Classified Appointment

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

- a. Ms. Jacqueline Torres, 4.5 Hour Cafeteria Worker (C. Salesky), Muhlenberg Elementary Center, effective upon return of students to in-person learning or as needed to prepare for the return of students, at a pay rate of \$15.03 per hour.

Management

1. School Calendar for the 2021-2022 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year as presented.

2. Memorandum of Understanding Between Muhlenberg Township Police Department and Muhlenberg School District

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the Memorandum of Understanding Between Muhlenberg Township Police Department and Muhlenberg School District as in accordance with "Safe Schools Act", PA School Code, Article XIII-A.

3. Memorandum of Understanding Between Laureldale Police Department and Muhlenberg School District

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District authorize the Memorandum of Understanding Between Laureldale Police Department and Muhlenberg School District as in accordance with "Safe Schools Act", PA School Code, Article XIII-A.

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Lupia asked if this was something that comes up every so often (the cooperation between the police departments and the District) or is this something new? Dr. Macharola replied, this is not new. These memorandums have been active for years and the District is required under the School Code, Article XIII-A to have those memorandums endorsed between the District and the police chiefs of those departments that the District encompasses.

Physical Plant and Transportation

1. Repaving and Relamping of MHS Parking Lot Bid Solicitation

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the request to proceed with construction documents and bid solicitation for repaving and relamping of the Muhlenberg High School parking lot as presented (Capital Reserve Fund).

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola said he recommended that this project be done at some point for safety reasons.

Budget and Finance

Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Dr. Macharola said the Governor has a very encouraging budget. Of the eighteen school districts in the county receiving funding, the second highest district is the Muhlenberg School District receiving \$9 million. He said there is so much that must happen between the House and the Senate before the budget is final. Administration knows that those monies will be modified as they have been in years past; however, it is encouraging to see this kind of spirit and steps taken for public education regarding equalized funding throughout the state. Dr. Macharola said there are winners and there are losers with that as well, but at this particular time and date, this is very promising. He said he was hoping that the District ends up in a good spot. The Board did the right thing by staying steady with their decision to stay within the index. Dr. Macharola asked Mr. Mathias to expand on that.

Mr. Mathias said with the Governor's budget that was released last week, there were some ambitious goals for public education. One of those was the basic education funding with Muhlenberg being one of those winners. Under the current proposed budget, Muhlenberg is poised to receive \$9.4 million, which is a 156% increase over the current allocation of just over \$6 million. He said it would be modified and it is unlikely that it will stay as it is, but it is encouraging to hear the discussion. Mr. Mathias said they essentially changed the way they are distributing the money based on the new funding formula which was developed about four years ago. He said he was going to wait to see what the state does and he was not going to include that into the budget because it is such a huge number.

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	Dec 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021 Ck#49202-49381 V#26678-26709	Dec 2020	
Cafeteria	Dec 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021 Ck#6995-7020 V#2845-2847	Dec 2020	
Capital Reserve (Fund 32)	Jan 2021	Jan 2021			
Capital Projects Fund (Fund 39)	Jan 2021	Jan 2021			
Activity	Dec 2020	Dec 2020			

2. Berks County Intermediate Unit Proposed Mandated Services Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the Berks County Intermediate Unit Proposed Mandated Services Budget for the 2021-2022 School Year at the district's share of \$42,997.80.

3. Approval of 2021 Mileage Rate

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the 2021 standard mileage reimbursement rate for the use of a personal vehicle for business purposes of .560¢ per mile in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service guidelines as of January 1, 2021.

Education

1. Agreement with BCIU and John's Driving School for Behind-the-Wheel Driver Education

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Muhlenberg School District approve the agreement with the Berks County Intermediate Unit and John's Driving School to provide behind-the-wheel instruction to students from the Muhlenberg School District as presented.

Minutes

Review minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 13, 2021; and, the Regular Board Meeting of January 13, 2021.

Old Business

There was none.

New Business

1. Memoriam of Mr. John T. Kissinger

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mr. John T. Kissinger who served in the Muhlenberg School District for twenty-eight (28) years (1956-1984) as a teacher and reading specialist. We honor his memory for his dedicated service to the school district and community.

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

2. Memoriam of Mr. Carl W. Richie

Resolved, that we remember the passing of Mr. Carl W. Richie who served in the Muhlenberg School District for thirty-four (34) years (1959-1993) as a math teacher and a coach. We honor his memory for his dedicated service to the school district and community.

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

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

February	Mr. Mark Nelson
March	Mr. Garrett Hyneman
April	Mrs. Cindy Mengle
May	Mr. Richard E. Hoffmaster

Review of Board Meetings and Calendar of Events

February 8	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
February 10	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
March 3	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 8	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
March 10	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
April 7	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
April 12	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
April 14	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
May 5	7:00 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
May 10	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting
May 12	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting
June 2	6:30 PM	Committee of the Whole and Regular Board Meeting
June 14	6:30 PM	RMCTC Board Meeting

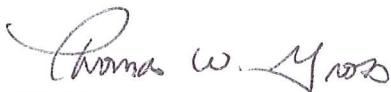
Comments/Questions/Concerns:

Mr. Nelson said when the Board begins to look at the budget; he would like them to take a look at possibly offering the early retirement incentive again this year. He said it was not offered last year and given the unknown situation of the District, it may be worth looking into. Mr. Nelson said if the District gets \$9.4 million, maybe this would not be necessary. Dr. Macharola said Mr. Nelson was making a good point and he supported his recommendation. Mr. Voit agreed too.

Adjourn Meeting

Moved by Mr. Hoffmaster and Mr. Gross, that there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM.

Attest:



Thomas W. Gross
Secretary