

CARLYNTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committee/Voting Meeting July 14, 2011 Carlynton Jr.-Sr. High School Library – 7:30 pm

MINUTES

The Carlynton School District Board of Education held its Committee/Voting Meeting on July 14, 2011 in the library of the junior-senior high school. Those in attendance included President Thomas Brown, Vice President Patricia Schirripa and School Directors Sandra Hughan, Ronald McCartney (via phone), Nyra Schell, Betsy Tassaro, Ray Walkowiak and Sharon Wilson. Also present was Superintendent Michael Panza, Solicitor Ira Weiss, Business Manager Kirby Christy and principals Laura Burns, Jacie Maslyk, Robert Susini and Christopher Very. The audience was comprised of 22 individuals and one member of the press.

CALL TO ORDER - *The meeting was called to order by President Brown at 7:31 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Walkowiak.*

ROLL CALL – *The roll was called by Recording Secretary Michale Herrmann; all board members were in attendance (Director McCartney by phone).*

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD: *None*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Director Tassaro moved, seconded by Director Schrippa, to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2011 Special Voting Meeting as presented.

By a voice vote, the motion carried 7-0-1 with Director Walkowiak abstaining.

REPORTS:

- **Executive Session** – *President Brown stated that employment, legal and labor issues were discussed in executive session, all within the guidelines of board policy.*
 - **Principals' Reports** – *Dr. Susini announced that the high school had been awarded a Healthy High Five Grant from Highmark; plans are to incorporate a health and fitness program into grades seven, eight and nine.*
 - **Superintendent's Report** – *Dr. Panza provided a fuel consortium update; sidewalk work has begun; the pedestrian sidewalks for Blacks Bridge in Crafton are to be ready and open prior to the start of school; the work by Verizon and Comcast is near completion which will allow the district to have a public access channel for broadcasting; the graduation project manual will appear on the August 4 agenda for approval; and the playground inspection went very well with recommendations for a few minor upgrades such as safety stickers and additional mulch. Dr. Panza asked the board's pleasure for the Crafton Elementary roof project. Director Tassaro said she wants the job to be done right the first time while spending money wisely; not just a quick fix. Mr. Recchio is to incorporate all comments from board members into the original RFP and the revisions will then*

Minutes of the June 24, 2011 Meeting

be presented to the board. In closing, Dr. Panza mentioned that Camp AIM's contract will expire at the end of next summer and they have requested a three-year extension. He noted that because the district hosts the summer camp, all district students attend for free, which amounts to an \$18,000 savings. Director Wilson commented that the opportunity for district students to serve as staff members is also invaluable. Dr. Panza said the new contract will be presented for the August 4 agenda.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

I. Miscellaneous

Director Wilson moved, seconded by Director Hughan, to approve the field trip request as reviewed by administration and presented:

- FT...M.Berlingeri...McKeever Environ. Ctr...Biodiversity/Ecology ...5/9-11/2012 (Miscellaneous Item #0711-01)

Director Tassaro said she and others present have chaperoned for the McKeever trip and it is a wonderful experience for students.

And declare audio and technology items as surplus as submitted and direct administration to dispose the equipment in a proper manner. (Miscellaneous Item #0711-02) **By a voice vote, the motion carried 8-0.**

II. Finance

~~The Carnegie Elementary Front Wall/Window Opening Request for Proposal as submitted and reviewed by the solicitor, and to advertise accordingly; (Finance Item #0711-01)~~ **REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA**

President Brown said this needs to be researched further.

~~Award the Running Track Replacement bid for the high school (six lane) track to _____, the lowest responsible bidder, at a cost of \$ _____; (Finance Item #0711-02a)~~ **REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA**

President Brown said only one bid was submitted and it was much higher than expected.

~~Award the Running Track Alternate Resurfacing bid for the high school (five lane) track to _____, the lowest responsible bidder, at a cost of \$ _____; (Finance Item #0711-02b)~~ **REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA**

Director Tassaro moved, seconded by Director Hughan, to approve the Letter of Agreement between the District and Pressley Ridge School for the 2011-2012 school year as submitted. Fees will only be assessed as services are rendered; (Finance Item #0711-03)

The Letter of Agreement between the District and Chartiers Community Mental Health and Retardation Center, Inc., for the 2011-2012 school year as submitted. Fees will only be assessed as services are rendered; (Finance Item #0711-04)

Field Trip Request

Surplus Equipment for Disposal

Carnegie Elementary Front Wall/Window Opening RFP

Running Track Replacement Bid (Six Lanes)

Running Track Alternate Resurfacing Bid (Five Lanes)

Letter of Agreement With Pressley Ridge

Letter of Agreement with CCMHRC

<p>The cafeteria operating report for the month of May 2011 as submitted by Aramark Educational Service with an ending year-to-date balance of \$52,537.49; (Finance Item #0711-05)</p>	<p>May 2011 Cafeteria Operating Report</p>
<p>The June 2011 Athletic Fund Report as submitted with a balance of \$2,448.95; (Finance Item #0711-06)</p>	<p>June 2011 Athletic Fund Report</p>
<p>The June 2011 Activities Fund Report as submitted with a balance of \$24,191.68; (Finance Item #0711-07)</p>	<p>June 2011 Activities Fund Report</p>
<p>And the July 2011 Real Estate Tax Refund for the Borough of Carnegie as presented. (Finance Item #0711-08) By a ROLL CALL VOTE, the motion carried 8-0.</p>	<p>Carnegie RE Tax Refund</p>
<p>Director Wilson moved, seconded by Director Schirripa, to approve the a change order to the sidewalk replacement bid to include an additional 1000 square feet of concrete work. By a voice vote, the motion carried 8-0.</p>	<p>Change Order to the Sidewalk Replacement Bid</p>
<p>III. Personnel</p>	
<p>Director Wilson moved, seconded by Director Schirripa, to reappoint David Oddi as district security person for the 2011-2012 school year at a contracted fee of \$400 per month.</p>	<p>District Security Person – David Oddi</p>
<p>Accept the resignation of Stephen Edwards, long-term substitute for the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year at the elementary level; (Personnel Item #0711-01)</p>	<p>Resignation of Stephen Edwards – LTS</p>
<p>Accept the resignation of Samantha Sosko, long-term substitute for the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year at the elementary level; (Personnel Item #0711-02)</p>	<p>Resignation of Samantha Sosko</p>
<p>Employ Jaylyn Sapsara as a long-term substitute for the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year at the elementary level, per the terms and conditions of the Carlynton Federation of teachers Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement; (Personnel Item #0711-03)</p>	<p>Employ Jaylyn Sapsara as LTS</p>
<p>Accept the resignation of Cayll Smith, varsity girls' basketball coach and junior high girls' basketball coach, effective immediately, and to post for said position; (Personnel Item #0711-04) <i>President Brown said the coach is relocating to Florida.</i></p>	<p>Resignation of Cayll Smith, VGB</p>
<p>And the following additions to the 2011-2012 Supplemental Athletic List as reviewed by the administration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ David Oddi, Athletic Director ▪ Don Militzer, Varsity Assistant Football Coach ▪ Christopher Colonna, Junior High Assistant Football Coach ▪ Kimberly Steiner-Squires, Varsity Assistant Girls' Soccer Coach (Personnel Item #0711-05) <p>By a voice vote, the motion carried 8-0.</p>	<p>Additions to the 2011-12 Supplemental Athletic List</p>
<p>UNFINISHED BUSINESS: <i>President Brown recalled a voting process at the last board meeting to approve a stipend for Dave Oddi for handling the</i></p>	

equipment manager position when a responsible party did not do the work. The earlier motion had failed 4-2 due to the lack of five votes. President Brown said he has since learned that the person originally hired to do the job sent a letter to the superintendent to state they were unable to fulfill the duties. President Brown asked Dr. Susini if he was aware of the circumstances. Dr. Susini said he was aware that Mr. Oddi had assumed the role of equipment manager in late January. President Brown asked why no one was made aware of the situation sooner and Dr. Susini said Mr. Oddi was in contact with the individual and he was attempting to resolve the issue. Director Walkowiak said he voted against the stipend because Dr. Panza said he was only made aware of the situation in May; he did not know it had been going for some time. Director Wilson said it was her understanding that Mr. Oddi was doing the work as a volunteer. President Brown said that given the further explanation, he was informed that anyone who originally voted against the stipend--for the work completed by Dave Oddi--could re-open the item as a motion to be voted upon again. No action was taken.

Director Tassaro said she would like to look at the hiring and interviewing practices of the district and establish a policy to make the process more open, fair and transparent. She said she has looked at other school district websites to discover some nice guidelines. She went on to say she believes an administrator and related staff members should be a part of the process and believes the board should make it a goal to set up some guidelines. Director Hughan said she disagreed. She said the board's job is to develop policy, hire and to oversee the finances and operation of the district, adding that the administrators do not live in the district. Director Tassaro said she respectfully disagreed with Director Hughan, indicating that a recent interview process had five board members and three administrators. She said this creates an unbalance in the process. Director Wilson said she agreed with Director Tassaro's last statement, adding that the interview process should be weighted or balanced evenly. Director Wilson agreed the process should be revamped and suggested that when administrators hold a committee meeting, they can problem solve to develop a uniform process and then bring that before the board. Director Schirripa said she appreciated the comments, but disagreed, adding the board's job is to hire and fire. She said this is something to be discussed later. Director Schell stated that a belief to hire and fire on the board's own inclination is a "symbolic slap on the face" to the administrators and borders on arrogance. She said the weight of the teachers, who know the subject area, and the administration should be considered in the interviewing process.

Director Tassaro asked Dr. Susini if schedules have been sent out to students. Dr. Susini said they will go out the beginning of August. He added that the principals and counselors will be available to students as of August 15 to work on any schedule changes.

President Brown announced that the interview process of candidates, to fill the open seat on the board, would commence at this point. Three chairs were set before the board; the candidates were Mark Popovich of Carnegie and David Roussos and Jim Schriver of Crafton. President Brown noted that five votes would be necessary for approval. Should there be a tie of 4-4, the board would have 30 days to fill the open seat. Solicitor Weiss said if no one is selected, a petition could be set before a judge by ten (10) resident taxpayers. Director Tassaro asked when the 30 days would be up; Mr. Weiss stated July 29th.

Director Tassaro asked if there would be costs should the petition go before a judge. Mr. Weiss said there would be costs associated for advertising.

With the three candidates seated before the board, Dr. Panza began a series of five directives/questions, rotating the questions among the three. They included:

- State your name, address and experiences with the school district
- Discuss your education and profession and explain how that would enhance your service to the board
- What do you believe are the three greatest strengths of the Carlynton School District
- What do you believe are the two greatest needs of the Carlynton School District and how would you address these needs
- Please tell the board why you are the best qualified person to fill this position.

Each candidate responded to every question. Following the interview process, President Brown asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience. There were none.

At that point, motions were made:

Director Schirripa moved, seconded by Director Hughan, to nominate Mark Popovich as the candidate to fill the open seat on the board;

Director Walkowiak moved, seconded by Director Wilson, to nominate Jim Schriver as the candidate to fill the open seat on the board.

Director Schirripa moved, seconded by Director Tassaro, to close the nominations. **By a voice vote, the motion carried 8-0.**

During a ROLL CALL VOTE, with each member of the board voting for the candidate of choice, the vote ended in at 4-4 tie, with President Brown and Directors Hughan, McCartney and Schirripa voting for Mr. Popovich, and Directors Schell, Tassaro, Walkowiak and Wilson voting for Mr. Schiver. The board has until July 29 to determine if they should hold a special meeting to discuss or a petition will be filed before a judge.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OPEN FORUM: Audience member Tom DiPietro of Carnegie asked the board and the audience if anyone has had any issues or comments about the people hired by the board in the past six years. No one responded. Then directing a question to Directors Schell and Schirripa, Mr. DiPietro asked if they had any special knowledge of the petition circulating in Rosslyn Farms, intended for seceding from the district. Both said no. Mr. DiPietro then turned to Director Tassaro and said it has been made public through the media that she was aware of the petition, and noted that she had never shared the information with the board. He referenced that Director Tassaro's husband had signed the petition. Mr. DiPietro then asked Director Tassaro to resign her seat as a board member because he believed her action was a conflict of interest. Director Tassaro said she had no inclination the petitions would actually be filed following the recent elections. Director Schell defended Director Tassaro.

William Griffin, a resident of Carnegie, stepped forward to ask to be considered as a football coach. He said he has been given the opportunity to volunteer with Coach Terry George and he appreciates it. Mr. Griffin said he has made some mistakes in the past, and offered no excuses, saying they were his fault. He added that he now has a college degree and wants to walk on a straight path. He has children in the district who do well and he loves Carlynton; he only wants the opportunity to work with the football team and make a difference, believing he can help turn the program around. Because the conversation was of a personal nature, President Brown suggested the board reconvene in executive session at the close of the meeting to discuss the matter further with Mr. Griffin.

Dr. Mona Rush, of Crafton, directed a comment to President Brown and Director McCartney, stating that she was dismayed with their action when voting for a candidate to fill the empty seat on the board. She ended by saying, “When are you going to get the message that the public has a vote.”

Crafton resident David O’Brien came forward to say this past year has been a terrible year for him and his family while they waited for the board to decide if they would close the elementary schools and build one combined school. He said the board needs to take some responsibility for dividing one another and the community. Going on, he stated the primary focus of the board should be the kids in the district.

Before adjourning, several audience members stood to make comments about the character of Mr. Griffin. One of them was Carnegie Mayor Jack Kobistek, who said he has grown to know Mr. Griffin in the past six years and said he is a good parent and a strong supporter of the district.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to discuss, Director Hughan moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm, seconded by Director Walkowiak. **By a voice vote, the motion carried 8-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kirby Christy, Board Secretary

Michale Herrmann, Recording Secretary