

| Members Present | Members Absent |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Keith Adams | Albert D. Marazas |
| Kevin Wigoda | Jessica M. McGrath |
| Cynthia Lubinsky | Sarah R. Newton |
| Michael Kroznuskie | Christopher M. Bowers |

The regular monthly meeting of the Minersville Area Board of Education was held in the Career & Counseling Center of the Junior-Senior High School and Zoom on Wednesday evening, December 1, 2021 immediately following the yearly Reorganization Meeting. The meeting was called to order by newly elected President, Keith Adams at 6:42 PM.

On roll call, the following responded: Keith Adams, Albert D. Marazas, Kevin Wigoda, Cynthia Lubinsky, Michael Kroznuskie, Jessica McGrath, Sarah Newton, and Christopher Bowers.

Others present: Dr. Carl G. McBreen, Superintendent; Jennifer Laudeman, Business Manager; Nicholas A. Quinn, District Solicitor and Barbara Conville, Secretary to the Superintendent/Assistant to the Secretary.

MOTION - by Marazas, seconded by Wigoda to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 22, 2021. Motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Approve Meeting Minutes of 11/22/2021

AGENDA

Dr. McBreen acknowledged the Cross Country students as Kaylei Wentz, Julia Burgess, Ayden Kurtek, Landon Boyle and Keegan Dube. Boyle and Dube were not present.

Cross Country members acknowledged

MOTION - by Wigoda, seconded by Newton to authorize Superintendent to authorize payment of bills with ratification at the January meeting.

Pay bills - Ratify January 2022

All in favor on a voice vote. Motion carried.

MOTION - by Marazas, seconded by Wigoda to authorize the Finance Committee to vote on the District's tax rate direction for the 2022-2023 school year with ratification at the January regular board meeting.

Tax Rate direction

Note: The Committee will review the following options associated with setting the tax rate for the following school year:

- a. Option 1 - not to raise taxes more than the index as set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- b. Option 2 - seek referendum exception to increase taxes more than the index as set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Mrs. Laudeman explained that she discussed tax rates earlier in the year and will be discussed at the two upcoming Finance Committee meetings. New board members should be brought up to speed prior to a vote on both options.

On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

MOTION - by Newton, seconded by Lubinsky to approve additional transportation run with Earl Renninger, Inc. as follows:

- a. M25 - BHA Lehighton - \$220 per day effective November 11, 2021

All in favor on a voice vote. Motion carried.

MOTION - by McGrath, seconded by Lubinsky to approve the following as volunteer coaches effective November 30, 2021 on recommendation of the Athletic Director, Rich Dry:

C. Bowers - volunteer coach

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Position</u> | <u>Salary</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| a. Christopher Bowers | Boys' Basketball, Assistant Coach | Volunteer |

Marazas brought up a concern of a board member as a coach. Stating they would have a vote for rehire, and possible influence on the coach during the season.

On roll call vote, Wigoda, Marazas, Kroznuskie, and Newton all opposed; while the remaining four members were in favor. 4-4, motion dies.

MOTION - by Wigoda, seconded by Lubinsky to approve the hire of Mrs. Erika Ledezma as a temporary professional employee, subject to assignment, effective January 3, 2022 at a prorated salary of \$35,700 on Step B001 for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Ledezma will work on an Emergency Certificate pending PDE certification is achieved before the 2023-2024 school year begins.

E. Ledezma hired

On a voice vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Items that were discussed include protocol for a visitor at a meeting to speak. Dr. McBreen stated that the Agenda must be publically advertised 24 hours prior to a meeting. In order to put someone on the Agenda as a speaker, a written request should be sent to the District Office seven (7) days prior to Agenda with a full outline of their discussion item(s). They must have decorum when they speak, attacking coaches or teachers would not be tolerated.

The next topic of discussion was the Mask Mandate. Dr. McBreen began with current COVID-19 cases in Schuylkill County as of today. Dr. McBreen suggests to keep in line with the CDC requirement of masking until a later date. Cases are increasing and a look at the data suggests that classrooms would be closed, rather than just lunch tables without the mask mandate. There would be a review on January 17th if the courts stay the mandate. Newton agrees. There are a lot of students that would be at home without help and Dr. McBreen said the isolation is not good for anyone and as long as we continue the course with masks, most students can stay in school.

Finally, Dr. McBreen discussed the interviews with the Assistant Principal candidates. He discussed bringing the four (4) applicants in front of an Administrative panel first, then in front of Board. All applicants would be subject to the exact same questions. Administrative interviews would be Tuesday, December 7th and in front of Board beginning at 6 PM on Thursday, December 9, 2021.

Bowers brought a listing of questions that the public presented to him. Questions were directed to Dr. McBreen that include:

- An issue of the district website: Act 84 states that all Board emails are to be posted to the webpage. Dr. McBreen said he would have those added.
- Health & Safety Plan, where in policies. The Health & Safety plan is posted to the District website.
- ESSR money - the perception is that nobody knows about it. Dr. McBreen explained that surveys were sent out and the plan is published after the funds are received.
- Charter Schools - Letters are sent from district meetings and calls were made by Dr. McBreen himself. Marazas added that legislatures don't realize the costs to public schools, while Mrs. Laudeman explained that the funding formula is unfair and outdated and this has been a topic the last two (2) years with \$3 million spent. This has been discussed at Finance Meetings, but no one from the public attends these meetings. Taxpayers need to be a part of the movement, and the 2008 summary review is over \$8.8 Million paid to cyber/charter schools. Newton explained that the demographics in Minersville have changed and most want a diagnosis for their child to get SSI monies, while Dr. McBreen said some of the students so have profound issues and currently over 300 students have IEP's. Adams mentioned a newsletter platform to inform the public. Laudeman explained that letters have gone out.
- ZOOM meetings - Why did they stop? Dr. McBreen explained that we offered the ZOOM meeting platform when public meetings were closed due to the pandemic. There is no reason to pay for a service when the public can now attend meetings.

- Cheerleaders on Midget football cheering for younger team - Dr. McBreen explained they are part of the Midget organization, which has nothing to do with the school. He allowed 7/8th grade cheerleaders to cheer at two (2) home football games for Junior High. The topic was discussed but the District cannot take on another activity financially.
- Dr. McBreen was also questioned about the teacher shortage. He explained that 'specials' teachers are being pulled due to lack of substitutes. English takes precedents over gym class or music class. McGrath explained that students should not get a grade for classes they are not taking due to cancellations. Maybe consider a Pass/Fail instead.
- ESS, the district' substitute vendor feels the substitute shortage. Dr. McBreen explained we are competitive with our daily substitute rate, the people are simply not there.
- Bowers brought up the online platforms to include Google classrooms. Dr. McBreen said that teachers are familiar with Blackboard and to change mid year would be counter productive.
- Finally, the dress code - people want it relaxed. Dr. McBreen said the dress code is currently relaxed but is being revisited with Principals, students and teachers to updated a more relaxed dress code.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

Correspondence

OLD BUSINESS

Old Business

There being no further business to report or discuss, the meeting adjourned on MOTION by Wigoda seconded by Newton at 7:27 PM

