

GREATER JOHNSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Education
Business Meeting
December 8, 2004
Johnstown High School

I. Called to order by Board President at 6:01 PM.

ATTENDEES:

Peter Cinelli	Russell Martin	John David Praught
Joanne Freeman	Richard McGuire	William Pollak
Kathleen Leo	Brian Miller	Christopher Swatt (arrived 6:07 PM)

ABSENT:

None

OTHERS:

John S. Whelan Katherine Sullivan

II. **SUPERINTENDENT'S/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS**

- Carolyn Beck introduced AFS exchange students Sakiko Onishi of Japan and Maja Sorensen of Norway, together with American Scholastic Association exchange student Hendrik Bathels of Germany. Ms. Onishi is staying with the Daley family, who are hosting for a third time. She told those present she is glad to be here, that she loves music and JHS has many good programs, and she is enjoying her stay. Ms. Sorensen is staying with the Lakata family, who are hosting for the first time. She mentioned that she is a senior, is enjoying everything and is participating in the music program. Mr. Bathels is staying with Fred Peets, who is hosting for an eighth year. He stated that he really likes sports, especially soccer and tennis, that they do not have this kind of sports program in Germany, and that he is glad to be here. Mr. Pollak asked what obligations the host families have and Ms. Beck explained that they open their homes and provide for the students as they would their own child, although they do have money to pay their own expenses, and it is not necessary to be bilingual. Mr. Martin asked if any of our students go overseas and Ms. Beck replied that some go for two months in the summer, but not for a whole year.
- Ms. Sullivan noted that the elementary computer program teaching assistants are getting students ready for junior high and doing some really amazing things. They will be making a presentation at the Board's meeting on January 19, 2005.
- Ms. Sullivan advised that as of three days ago, Dominick Baggatta had no news with regard to the 21st Century Learning Centers grant that was discussed at the last Board meeting.
- Mr. Whelan reported he had heard from some members of the community at the two public forums held on November 30th and December 7th to discuss the District-Wide III Capital Project. Dave Bonacci of Fuligni-Fragola Architects was present to review proposed costs and address Board members questions. It was noted that if the Board chooses to proceed with only the Basic project, which consists of improvements to the six buildings (JHS, Knox, Warren, Pleasant, Jansen & Glebe), the estimated cost will be \$4,904,186. If the Board chooses to proceed with both the Basic project and all of the Alternates (HS auditorium, HS concession Stand, Knox synthetic turf, new bus maintenance/storage), the estimated cost is \$11,452,306. A discussion was held regarding the possibility of purchasing land on which to construct a new bus maintenance/storage facility and it was determined a minimum of nine or ten acres would be necessary. The impact of the project with regard to expected tax increases for local property owners was reviewed. If only the Basic project is undertaken, school taxes on a home assessed at \$50,000 will increase about \$9.65 per year, on home assessed at \$75,000 by about \$14.34 per year, and on a home assessed at \$100,000 by about \$19.12 per year. If both the Basic project and the Alternates are undertaken, school taxes on a home assessed at \$50,000 will increase about \$21.77 per year, on a home assessed at \$75,000 by about \$32.65 per year, and on a home assessed at \$100,000 by about \$43.53 per year.

III. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

None

IV. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Academic – R. Martin announced the next meeting will be held on January 5, 2005 @ 5:00 PM
- Capital Projects – C. Swatt indicated it had been covered already this evening.
- Restructuring – C. Swatt advised that 3,951 surveys had been sent out and 356 were received back (about 9%). Final tallies indicate that 13% of those responding are in favor of three buildings with a K-6 configuration; 25% of those responding are in favor of three buildings with alternative group settings; and 61% of those responding are in favor of keeping the current singleton system. Mr. Swatt advised that this is not the end of the process, just the beginning and we are still compiling information. He announced that there will be an informal meeting held at JHS at 7:00 PM on December 15th so that the Restructuring Committee and the public can further discuss this matter.
- Buildings & Grounds – B. Pollak, no report.
- Finance – B. Miller, no report

V. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR FOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

"In accordance with its practice, the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District does not permit oral comments from the public relating to specific personnel decisions regarding individuals employed by the District during the portion of its business meeting where the Board permits the public comment on agenda and non-agenda items. The Board will accept written comments from the public on this subject matter and all other agenda and non-agenda items."

- Lisa McCoy said she was previously involved with the Gloversville Hall of Fame, but she wasn't aware JHS had a Hall of Fame until recently and in her opinion it is an embarrassment. She said she has heard that only one honoree was at this year's ceremony and his name was mispronounced, and that there was only a one line press release to the media the day of, or day before, the ceremony, which was insufficient. She questioned the selection process and why past honorees did not know about this year's program.
- Mr. McGuire stated that an advertisement is placed in the newspaper seeking nominations and that the nominations for the next selection will close on January 31, 2005. He advised that the nominations are reviewed by a committee of individuals from the community consisting of a cross-section of attorneys, teachers, politicians and other highly regarded individuals. He indicated the committee uses its best judgment to consider the nominations and make a decision and that it is all entirely above board. He mentioned that he has received hate mail from people upset when their nominees are not selected, so the committee members are kept unidentified to keep pressure off of them and therefore the only person publicly associated with the Hall of Fame is himself.
- Mrs. McCoy replied that the program is not handled efficiently and that better public relations are needed.
- Mr. Cinelli said Mrs. McCoy might be correct in that more PR is needed. He asked if the ceremony is always held together with the National Honor Society inductions.
- Mr. Martin pointed out that this was only the second year of the program and obviously there are bugs still being worked out.
- Dick Baker stated he felt if a press release was given ahead of time and people recognized former classmates being honored, more people would come out. He asked if the Board would be breaking up the capital project as the resolution later in the agenda didn't make it clear. Mr. Whelan advised that it would be discussed when the resolution came up.
- Kathy Zajicek said she thinks the capital project is wonderful, she is excited about it both as a teacher and a taxpayer. She encourages the Board to be proactive and progressive. She attended one of the public forums and feels the people were very receptive.

- Mike Beatty agreed with Ms. Zajicek. He added that he is glad it was opened up to the public for input two times, that this was a good gesture. He would like to see the Board go forward with the entire package. He asked that the Board not be divisive or divide up the project as doing so might divide the community. He said the entire package will benefit all children, it needs to be put out as a whole and we need to see the Board united. He stated that he is a taxpayer with a child in the District, that this is an investment in the future and said we need to have faith in the public because they will support it.
- Kevin Quinn said he would like to see the whole package voted on and that he was very supportive of it. He stated that his children are at the end of their tenure at Johnstown, but this will be a boost for future programs and children. He mentioned we want to lure people to the community to expand the tax base and those who can't afford the Albany/Schenectady area but who are looking for good quality of life will look where there are good schools.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Praught seconded by Mr. Cinelli to approve the minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on November 17, 2004.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

VII. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL

1. Separations

2. Leave of Absences

3. Abolishments

4. Creations/Appointments/Adjustments

a. Emergency Conditional Probationary Appointment of David Wood, Carpenter

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District hereby conditionally appoints David Wood, to the position of Carpenter, \$13.83 per hour, 12 months per year, effective November 29, 2004, subject to the rules of the Fulton County Personnel Department. In accordance with the Civil Service Rules, such appointment is a probationary appointment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this appointment is made on a conditional basis and subject to the receipt of a statement from David Wood regarding criminal conviction(s) or pending criminal charges and the receipt of criminal background clearance from the Commissioner of Education. Mr. Wood's continued employment is specifically contingent upon the District's receipt of notice, from the Commission of Education that he is fully cleared for employment:

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

b. Emergency Conditional Substitute Appointment of Susan Thompson, Food Service Helper

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District hereby conditionally appoints Susan Thompson, to the position of Food Service Helper, \$6.50 per hour, effective November 18, 2004 through June 30, 2005, subject to the rules of the Fulton County Personnel Department. In accordance with the Civil Service Rules, such appointment is a substitute appointment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this appointment is made on a conditional basis and subject to the receipt of a statement from Susan Thompson regarding criminal conviction(s) or pending criminal charges and the receipt of criminal background clearance from the Commissioner of Education. Ms. Thompson's continued employment is specifically contingent upon the District's receipt of notice, from the Commission of Education that she is fully cleared for employment:

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

c. Casual Employment Opportunities for the 2004/05 School Year

Motion by Ms. Freeman seconded by Ms. Leo to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve William G. Roth (Greg) for casual employment opportunities for the 2004/05 school year at a pay rate per the casual employment opportunity pay schedule.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

B. Approval of District-Wide III Capital Project

Motion by Ms. Freeman seconded by Mr. Pollak to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the District Wide III Capital Project in the amount of \$11,452,306.00 effective December 8, 2004.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

C. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT OF UNPAID TAXES

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Cinelli to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the tax collector's report of unpaid taxes as seen in addendum # 1.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

D. WARRANTS

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Cinelli to accept the recommendation of the District Auditor, to accept warrants #5 and #6 dated October 1-31, 2004, as seen in addendum #2.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

E. TREASURER'S REPORT

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Cinelli to accept the recommendation of the District Treasurer, to accept the Treasurer's Report for October 1-31, 2004, as seen in addendum # 3.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

F. VENDOR LIST

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Cinelli to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the Vendor List for October 1-31, 2004, as seen in addendum #4.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

G. COOPERATIVE MEAT BID #05-08

Motion by Mr. Miller seconded by Mr. Cinelli to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the Cooperative Meat Bid #05-08 to Quandt's and Ginsberg's as the lowest, qualified, responsible bidders, as seen in addendum #5.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

VIII. EDUCATION ITEMS

A. PERSONNEL

1. Separations

a. Resignation of Peter Brabant, Elementary Principal

Motion by Mr. Praught seconded by Mr. Martin to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to accept the resignation of Peter Brabant, with regret, as elementary principal, effective December 23, 2004.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

2. Leave of Absences

3. Abolishments

4. Creations/Appointments/Adjustments

a. Retroactive Term Appointment of Jonathan Battisti, as Physics Teacher

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Praught to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the retroactive term appointment of Jonathan Battisti as physics teacher (pending modified temporary license) at Step A1 (\$34,257) of the collective bargaining agreement with the Johnstown Teachers' Association effective September 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

b. Term Appointment of David Burnham, as Interim Elementary Principal

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Praught to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the term appointment of David Burnham, as interim elementary principal at \$350 per day effective December 20, 2004 through June 24, 2005.

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

c. **Payment of Music Festival Stipends**

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Praught to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the payment of music festival stipends for attendance at the Area All State Festival on November 20-21, 2004 for the following individuals:

Dan Jones \$ 104.00

Sarah Corrigan \$ 104.00

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

d. **Appointment of Intramural Advisors**

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Praught to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the term appointments of the following individuals as intramural advisors at \$19.00 per hour (by timesheet) for the 2004-2005 school year:

Cindy Cromer

Betty Flanders

Jennifer Cronkhite

Mike Satterlee

Quinn Sitterly

Tracy Ringer

Susan Williamsen

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – CSE

1. **Committee for Special Education**

Motion by Mr. Swatt seconded by Ms. Leo to approve the minutes of the Committee for Special Education meetings held on November 18, 2004.

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000250002 002400083

002400068 000860167

002400071 000250003

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

C. STUDENT MATTERS

1. **Field Trip for International Club and Student Council**

Motion by Mr. Cinelli seconded by Mr. Miller to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the International Club and Student Council field trip to Montreal and Quebec City on Friday - May 27, 2005 (12:00 PM) through Sunday – May 29, 2005 (10:00 PM).

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

IX. BOARD OF EDUCATION ITEMS

1. **First Reading of Revised Policies:**

#1710- Quorum

#3410 – Code of Conduct on School Property

2. Waiver of Second Reading and Adoption of Revised Policies

Motion by Mr. Pollak seconded by Ms. Freeman to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent, to waive the second reading of the following revised policies and adopt the same effective December 8, 2004.

#1710 – *Quorum*

#3410 – *Code of Conduct on School Property*

VOTE: 9 YES 0 NO

X. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Mr. Praught and Mr. Cinelli questioned unpaid taxes by Gates Mills and Mr. Whelan indicated that this is still being pursued by the attorneys.
- Mr. Praught wished Glebe Street Principal Peter Brabant luck in his new position at another school district. He said he was sorry to see him go, that he was a good principal and had put Glebe Street on the right path. He mentioned that Mr. Brabant had taken the time to sign the report card of every single student each quarter.
- Mr. McGuire offered Mr. Brabant a “pat on the back”. He said it would not be proper to hold him back or resent him as this is a step up to a bigger job in a bigger school with an opportunity to improve.
- Mr. Brabant thanked the Board and Administration and said he has many good memories. He stated that he will still be in Johnstown as a parent and volunteer.
- Mr. Pollak asked Mr. Whelan to talk about David Burnham, who will take over at Glebe Street as interim principal. Mr. Whelan indicated that he is a retired superintendent, a former elementary teacher and principal and had worked at a charter school. He stated that his background is extensive and that he has known him for many years.
- Mr. Praught asked if Mr. Burnham will be coming in for a transition period prior to Mr. Brabant’s departure. Mr. Whelan indicated he will.
- Mr. Swatt stated that it was great to see the intramurals come to fruition finally as they had been a long time coming.
- Lisa Askew asked how soon the District would start looking for principals to fill positions. Mr. Whelan said advertisements will be placed in January, someone should be appointed by April and then start in July.
- Mr. Brabant commended Glebe Street Phys Ed teacher Cindy Cromer, who originally volunteered for intramurals and then recruited two other teachers. He thanked the Board for now paying them.
- Lisa McCoy asked for clarification on the process for choosing principals. Mr. Whelan responded that a committee will work with the PTA, Teachers and Administrators to choose candidates to interview and recommend.
- Dick Baker asked if the tax warrant report on the agenda was for the most recent tax year (2004-2005) and what percentage of people haven’t paid. Mr. Whelan replied that he did not have exact numbers at that moment, but he believes it is in the normal range.
- Mr. Swatt inquired as to the Business Administrator and Athletic Director positions and Mr. Whelan advised that these would be further discussed in Executive session.

XI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

January 5, 2005	Discussion/Business Meeting	6:00 PM Public Session Glebe Street Elementary
January 19, 2005	Business Meeting	6:00 PM Public Session Johnstown High School

XII. MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE EMPLOYMENT HISTORY OF PARTICULAR PERSONNEL, AND NEGOTIATIONS

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Cinelli to go to executive session for the purpose of discussing the employment history of particular personnel, and negotiations, at 7:14 PM.

VOTE: 9 Yes 0 No

XIII. MOTION TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Cinelli to return to public session at 9:21 PM.

VOTE: 9 Yes 0 No

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Martin seconded by Mr. Cinelli to adjourn at 9:21 PM.

VOTE: 9 Yes 0 No

Respectfully submitted,

Larraina Carpenter
District Clerk