

JANUARY 11, 2022, WORK SESSION

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Roll Call

Present: Tracy Doughtie, Albert Bieber, Rebecca Charles, Chris Gastrock, Wayne Hackett, John Hoover, Maegan McConnell, Lee Stocks, Linda West

1. Call to Order

Minutes

President Gastrock called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

2. Roll Call of Members

3. Discussion - Quad 3 Contract

As reviewed and accepted by Solicitor Lantz.

Minutes

Mrs. Perry updated the Directors that the contract between Quad 3 Architects and the Wellsboro Area School District for the Rock L. Butler Middle School project has been reviewed by the district's solicitor and will be presented for consideration at the January board meeting. The total fee included within the contract is \$ 381,500.00.

4. Discussion - Articles of Incorporation of Wellsboro Parks and Recreation Authority

Articles of Incorporation of Wellsboro Parks and Recreation Authority; Notice of Special Joint Meeting of the Borough of Wellsboro and Wellsboro Area School District.

(Handout #1)

Minutes

Mrs. Perry briefed the Directors that a handout had been included with tonight's agenda materials referring to the Articles of Incorporation of Wellsboro Parks and Recreation Authority. A Special Joint Meeting of the Borough of Wellsboro and Wellsboro Area School District will need to be scheduled. The Borough of Wellsboro has agreed to host the meeting.

5. Discussion - Transfer of Fiduciary Responsibilities of Parks and Recreation

Transfer of Fiduciary Responsibilities of Parks and Recreation from the Wellsboro Area School District to Wellsboro Parks and Recreation, with the following terms/conditions, with an effective date of February 1, 2022. The Administration is authorized to close existing financial accounts held by the District and transfer the January 31, 2022 balances to Wellsboro Parks and Recreation. The District understand that the period of July 1, 202 through January 31, 2022 will be reported on the District's financial statements for the period ending 6/30/22. Effective February 1, 2022, the District will no longer bear the fiduciary responsibility for the Parks and Recreation Program.

Minutes

The administration is seeking consideration to transfer the fiduciary responsibilities of Parks and Recreation from the Wellsboro area School District to Wellsboro Parks and Recreation. This would be in consideration of the Parks and Recreation being created under its own authority. The fiduciary transfer would be effective February 1, 2022. This will be an item placed on the January agenda for formal consideration.

6. Discussion - MOU authorizing the Wellsboro Area School District to provide a sign-on and retention bonus to part-time support employees

MOU authorizing the Wellsboro Area School District to provide a sign-on and retention bonus to part-time support employees.

(Handout 3).

Minutes

Like many employers within the community, WASD has several part-time support positions that have remained open during this school year. In an effort to attract and retain part-time support employees, the district would be offering a \$ 2,000.00 retention or sign-on bonus to the part-time support employees who work 5 or less hours per day and are not afforded full benefits under the Collective Bargaining Agreement. This M.O.U. has been drafted by the district's labor attorney and will be placed on the January board agenda for formal consideration.

7. Discussion - High School Greenhouse - Stuppy Greenhouse Design

Acceptance of written quote provided by Stuppy Greenhouse Design, totaling \$ 54,644 for materials only.

(Handout 4).

Minutes

Mrs. Perry reminded the Directors that during the CTE review completed by PDE, it was determined that the existing greenhouse at the Wellsboro Area High School is in adequate for the program and for the number of students who participate. The district has legally advertised and solicited quotes for both greenhouse materials and construction. At that time, no formal quotes were received. The administration then reached out to Stuppy Greenhouse Design and was able to work through a formal quote totaling \$ 54,644.00 for materials, and for subcontracting of the labor to build the greenhouse by Red Brick Farm Enterprises, LLC, totaling \$ 38,000.00. The

district has previously received \$25,000.00 in matching state grants and Mrs. Berndsten continues to fundraise for the remaining costs. These items will be placed on the January board agenda for formal consideration.

8. Discussion - High School Greenhouse - Red Brick Farm Enterprises, LLC

Acceptance of written quote provided by Red Brick Farm Enterprises, LLC to provide labor to build Stuppy greenhouse in the amount of \$ 38,000.00.

(Handout 4-a)

9. Discussion - SilverTip Change Order #3

SilverTip Change Order #3 covering costs to add hose bibs in the amount of \$ 8,084.83.

(Handout #5)

Minutes

Mr. Gastrock updated the members on the submission of Change Order #3, totaling \$ 8,084.83, for the installation of eight hose bibs in the Middle School restrooms. Mr. Gastrock stated that installation of the hose bibs would permit a garden hose to be utilized to clean the restrooms. Discussion included the pricing, the feasibility of the hose bibs in as far as frequent of use, and other alternatives that could be made. The directors agreed that the change order would be included on the January board agenda for formal consideration.

10. Discussion - SEON Proposal for Wi-Fi Downloading Project

SEON Proposal for Wi-Fi downloading project in the amount of \$ 22,072 added onto the existing bus surveillance video system. This additional project would be funded through the capital reserve fund.

(Handout #6)

Minutes

Mrs. Perry updated the Directors on a proposal received for the SEON bus surveillance video system currently being utilized on the transportation buses. Currently the district's administration and contractors must physically exchange a camera cassette in order to view the recordings. The recordings are frequently used for contact tracing and discipline purposes. The current process creates delays in response by the district. The district received a proposal totaling \$22,072.00 that would provide for Wi-Fi download. This item will be presented for formal consideration on the January board meeting agenda.

11. First Reading of Policies

First Reading of Policies:

- 111 - Lesson Plans
- 800.1 - Electronic Signatures/Records

- 803 - School Calendar
- 705 - Facilities and Workplace Safety
- 904 - Public Attendance at School Events
- 907 - School Visitors
- 805 - Emergency Preparedness and Response

Copies were provided at the Director's Seats.

Minutes

Dr. Freeman provided an overview of the policies being presented for First Reading. Several of the plans have been recently amended but changes have been presented since then. These are all updates presented by PSBA. It is very thorough and easy for the Directors. PSBA provides a legal review on their recommended policy updates. These policies will be presented for formal consideration on the January board agenda.

12. Discussion - WASD Health & Safety Plan

Minutes

Dr. Freeman introduced the Health & Safety Plan. Each 6 months the Board is required to review the Health & Safety Plan review. We have been spending a lot of time reviewing the plan. Mrs. Doughtie has been working very hard to develop a review document with additional columns added.

Discussion amongst the Directors and the administration included the following topics:

- HEPA filters were recommended by CDC and the district also uses the Vital Oxide. It was confirmed that each classroom and hallway is included within the airflow.
- Confirmation was provided that desks are being wiped down between the classroom transition times and that the district continues to employ part-time custodians to assist with cleaning high-touch areas throughout the day.
- Contact tracing - Dr. Freeman clarified the process that the district utilizes to complete contact tracing. Contact tracing literally begins from the minute the district is notified of a positive case and includes video review and a complete investigation. When the masks are on, it does make the contact tracing stipulations easier. If your students are fully masked and within 3-6 feet, not considered a close contact. If you're outside of the 6 feet, then not close contact. Sometimes there are discrepancies between the PA Dept. of Health and CDC recommendations. Isolation and Quarantine = 5 days. If you're not vaccinated, or did not have booster, then you're considered someone who has to quarantine. One of the main things that keep our schools open is not sending children to school when they are ill. On day 5 when you come out of quarantine, without symptoms, you can return. Mask must continue to be worn from days 6 to 10. Test on day 5 is recommended. Your quarantine isolation after the day of exposure. Exposure day equals Day 0. If you do test positive, stay home for days 1 through 5.
- Discussion on athletics were held and included whether athletes should be required to wear masks and/or test after quarantining for five days. Dr. Freeman stated that the district does have a short supply of test kits. Tests have been reserved for probable cases of students, parents, and staff. A school-sponsored rapid test is sufficient for negative and/or positive test. The topic of Test To Stay was also discussed and Dr. Freeman stated that there are many different components to Test To Stay. The purpose of Test To Stay is to be able to stay in school instead of quarantining. The criteria includes if you test negative and 2nd negative test result on 2nd test on days 5-7. We have on hand about 75 tests. Mr. Kreger is our pandemic coordinator and we are lucky to have him on staff. He has completed specific training. He has placed an

order of 300 test kits. This is why I caution us to utilize the tests for near confirmed cases because we don't know when additional test kits will be received.

Mrs. Doughtie continued the discussion by asking if the Directors wished to start making decisions. In regards to athletics, the idea that I brought to the plate was to mirror what the university was doing. Days 1-5 Quarantine; Day 6 (return) to participate, just mask without testing or testing positive with mild symptoms and a negative test the athlete would be able to participate without mask.

Mr. Gastrock stated that he felt that is more than reasonable. Day 6 = negative test/no mask or refuse to test or test positive, must mask for days 6-10.

Mrs. West pointed out that someone could potentially test positive for 90 days following a positive test.

Mr. Byrd confirmed that has been district practice with a regular student, regardless if they are an athlete or not.

Mr. Hoover agreed that masks should be worn for days 6-10 to participate in athletics.

Mr. Gastrock wished to confirm that masking was only for positive cases at day 6.

Dr. Freeman stated there is no mandate to require testing. The district always encourages students and staff who are feeling ill to stay home.

Mr. Hoover stated that if the testing option were put in place, it is the student/family choice. A negative test wouldn't require masking for days 6-10.

Mr. Gastrock pointed out that the athletes are still in competition with other districts who may not even completing contact tracing.

Mrs. McConnell confirmed that students are technically eligible to return to school after 5 days of quarantining when they are asymptomatic or have completed 24 hours fever free w/o fever-reducing medicine. I just think if they are asymptomatic that they should be able to participate on their own after day 5.

Diagnostic & Screening Test - Dr. Freeman provided a report from the handout. I don't want to implement anything that states you MUST complete a test, then it goes against having our children return to school. I would not to say that a Test to Stay would be feasible.

Mrs. Doughtie stated the whole goal of Test To Stay is to have students remain in school. If test kits were available, that may be an option but it is not an option right now - either for students and/or athletes?

Dr. Freeman stated she would rather retain the available tests for parents and staff who feel they have a reason to test. It is nice to be able to offer our facility to community members who wish to be vaccinated. I believe these are community buildings and we should partner with community stakeholders to offer a vaccine clinic.

Appropriate accommodations for Special Ed

Dr. Freeman - Meeting are regularly held with parents and teachers with 504 accommodations. Are face shields an alternative? PDE does say that wearing a cloth facemask is preferred over face shield, but it is an alternative. The face shields must be one that is proper fitting as well. We actually supplied them during the first year; baseball cap with visors and that shields should be an alternative and not just require masks. We do have exceptions and honor 504 plans, with a doctor note. I believe that face shields can be a good alternative as well. If you need an accommodation, make an appointment, or contact the school nurses. Parents can always talk with our nurses and if it's an emotional/social issue, then a parent should reach out to the district's school psychologists. I would

recommend that a shield be an alternative to a mask.

Mr. Hoover asked whether plexiglass is being used any more. Dr. Freeman confirmed that plexiglass is not currently recognized as a mitigation effort. When we first learned of these items, we tried to act as quickly as possible to have students return to in-person learning.

Mrs. Charles asked if use of a face shield still requires the 3-6 social distance, to which Dr. Freeman responded as yes.

Mr. Hoover sought clarification that socially distancing at 3 to 6 feet can occur within in our district. Dr. Freeman responded that most areas are at 6 feet, but some are at 3 feet. We literally went around in our district and made sure 6 feet was implemented, but we had a different schedule at that time.

Mrs. Charles inquired as to what would our administration need in timeframe to make the changes that may occur through the modifications into the Health and Safety Plan. Dr. Freeman deferred to the building administrators. Mr. Byrd stated that it was easier to maintain the 6 feet social distancing when there was a 4 block schedule. Transitioning from a 3-6' social distance to a 6' social distance would require changes being made to classroom sizes. Mr. Kreger stated that with a 3-6' social distance, that could occur tomorrow. If the plan states 6' social distancing, modifications would be required and would we change the teacher prep time at the end of the day.

Discussion continued about the importance of continuing contact tracing regardless of the masking status within the Health & Safety Plan.

Mrs. Charles inquired as to the district offering fit-tested N-95 masks to faculty to ensure our teachers have a safe environment. Dr. Freeman explained in the beginning of the pandemic, a lot of avenues were available to get masks. N-95 use was always cautioned that they were saved for health care professionals. We haven't had an opportunity to purchase those. If there's a vendor that we could find them, we would be happy to include in our ESSER grant and purchase those. Mr. Kreger confirmed that it would be easy enough to find someone that would be able to complete the fitting.

The last topic being discussed is Universal Masking.

Dr. Freeman stated there is no regulatory requirement but CDC does have recommendations. Discussions included the wearing of masking for band and chorus.

Mr. Hoover inquired as to the dashboard on the district's website since the holiday break. He specifically asked what the trends has been before Christmas break compared to now.

Dr. Freeman reported that 13 positive cases are reported right now; less than 1%. Prior to Christmas break, the district had 5-7 positive cases.

Mr. Gastrock asked Dr. Freeman from updated in the superintendent meetings, for the districts who have mask optional, have they seen increases in their case numbers? Mrs. Doughtie inquired as to whether other districts were tracking the counts. Dr. Freeman confirmed that some of the schools within the IU are not completing any contact tracing. Others believe that even though masks aren't in place, they feel a responsibility to continue contact tracing to keep kids in school. When asked Dr. Freeman's opinion on if the district were to choose masks being optional whether she felt contact tracing should continue, she responded that contact tracing has been a large part of our mitigation efforts. I think a lot of parents feel comfortable with the mitigation efforts of the district and doing contact tracing doesn't have anything to do with a parental choice, but it's simply good practice to keep our kids in school. There is no guideline that provides for thresholds requiring remote learning. If you're seeing a cluster or a percentage of students in a certain classroom, then we would let parents know that. Vaccination status

will help in the mitigation process. I am not aware of any districts that aren't following the isolation timeline.

Mrs. Doughtie asked about the creation of thresholds for pivoting to remote learning. Dr. Freeman responded that every situation is different. You may have people that are in a classroom that wouldn't be considered a close contact because of all the other circumstances go with it, such as vaccine status . That is the hardest thing for people to understand. It depends on the individual circumstances of each individual case.

Mr. Hoover agreed that making a change doesn't necessarily change every mitigation.

Mr. Doughtie asked how does the Health & Safety Plan get from this discussion to a revision. Dr. Freeman stated that in order to create the vision, there continues to be a main thread - do we have a masking mandate in our school? If it is, then everything else falls to place in your Health & Safety Plan. There has to be a vote whether amend the existing plan. The Directors tasked Dr. Freeman and the administrative team to amend the plan and present it.

The only other discussion amongst the Directors was a question by Mrs. Doughtie as to the status of the Board Committee assignments from the reorganization meeting. Mr. Gastrock stated he would send the forms seeking committee assignments by the Directors. The plan is to have the Committee Chairs complete a calendar for 2022 of planned meeting dates to share.

13. Principals Updates

14. Public Comment

Minutes

Prior to public comments, Mr. Gastrock called for adjournment at 8:49 P.M.

With additional discussion about public comments being provided, public comments began at 8:50 P.M. and several public comments were shared with the Directors regarding support for and against masking. Each public comment was expressed with emotion and the Directors expressed their appreciation of the comments being shared.

15. Adjournment

Minutes

Mr. Gastrock confirmed that public comment is typically reserved for voting meetings and that the Directors do appreciate all the input but work sessions are really set up to the board to deliberate and for the community to

listen. This is the same practice for the committee meetings. He reiterated that he was not trying to be disrespectful but was explaining that there are times when the Directors need opportunity to discuss important topics.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM by Chris Gastrock.

Laura Perry
Board Secretary