

**EAST STROUDSBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
June 13, 2016**

**Carl T. Secor Administration Building – Board Room
5:30 P.M.**

Minutes

- I. The Chairman, Gary Summers, called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Secretary, Patricia Rosado called the roll.
- II. Board Committee members present were: Debbie Kulick, Gary Summers and Lisa VanWhy. Ronald Bradley was absent.

Non-Committee Board members present were: Judy Summers

School Personnel Present: Jeff Bader, Brian Borosh, Sharon Laverdure, Thomas Lesniewski, Fred Mill, Ryan Moran, Patricia Rosado, Kim Stevens and Robert Sutjak

Community members present: Sarah Detrick

Jenna Van Harpen – Blue Bird
Mason Hemphill - Brightbill

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the agenda for June 13, 2016, and with members of the Committee reserving the right to add to the agenda and take further action in the best interest of the District. Motion was seconded by Lisa VanWhy and carried unanimously, 3-0.

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2016, meeting. Motion was seconded by Lisa VanWhy and carried unanimously, 3-0.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

- a. Alternative Fuel Buses – Brightbill Transportation
Ms. Jenna Van Harpen – Blue Bird and Mr. Mason Hemphill - Brightbill presented information on Propane vs. Natural Gas buses. Ms. Van Harpen said that there are over 23 million vehicles on propane. It is environmentally friendly. Natural Gas is under higher pressure than propane and requires additional safety features. Since 1991 Blue Bird has offered propane buses. Propane buses require less maintenance than diesel or CNG buses.

There is currently grant money available to help reduce the cost of both propane and CNG. Mr. Summers asked what districts use propane. Ms. Van Harpen said Delaware Valley School District currently uses propane and Pocono Mountain is in the process of converting to propane. Lower Merion School District uses CNG. Mrs. Laverdure asked if they use Natural Gas for all buses. Mr. Hemphill said they do not. Mrs. Laverdure asked why not. Mr. Hemphill said because of the cost. Ms. Kulick asked what is weather component. Ms. Van Harpen said that buses can function in negative 40 degrees weather. The Ford engine's warranty is five years and the fuel tanks are puncture resistant. This is a little better than a diesel engine. The mini buses are not gas. There are different grants with different requirements and EPA certified. A propane engine is much quieter than a diesel engine making the audio on the bus cameras easier to hear. The map shows Pennsylvania as being the 3rd largest user of propane. California and Texas are 1st and 2nd. The district can start slowly. There are rebates for propane. Some fuel providers install the pumps if we have a contract with them. This is a savings of about \$50,000 to \$200,000. There is technology training with no change to the district for switching alternative fuel. Rebates are available of .50 cents from January 31, 2015 and .36 cents until December 31st, 2016 for fuel. Mr. Hemphill said that if the district gets grant money, 50% is paid by the State. Prices were compared as follows:

Diesel	\$2.35
Gas	\$2.235
CNG	\$1.052
Propane	\$1.008

They compared specifics to the ESASD fleet. It includes fuel and preventive maintenance, such as oil and air filters. It's a savings of about \$2,600 per bus per year. Every rebate will have a considerable amount of savings.

Mrs. VanWhy asked if there is a start-up cost and is CNG more than propane. Ms. Van Harpen said it's about \$40,000 more for CNG than propane. Ms. VanWhy asked what is the cost for the stations. Ms. Van Harpen said stations are scalable. Mr. Hemphill said Pocono Mountain is putting in an 18,000 gal station for an estimated cost of about \$180,000. Ms. Kulick asked what is the grant cycle. Mr. Hemphill said it goes from year to year. Mr. Summers asked what is the difference in price between propane and diesel buses? Mr. Hemphill said it's about a \$7,000 difference. Mr. Summers asked if this is on one or two lots. Mr. Hemphill said the savings is on two lots. Mrs. Laverdure said that Pocono Mountain School District has two lots but one pump station which are seven miles apart. Mr. Summers said he understands how they run their buses. He asked when is the district planning to go out for bids. Mr. Bader said that they would like to go out for bids in September 2016 for the 2017/18 school year. Mr. Summers asked if that will be for the normal quantity. Mr. Bader said the district does not have normal but they are trying to go for the same amount. If the Board would like to pursue, he suggests that they start at one lot. Mr. Summers asked if we have room. Mr. Bader said that they can accommodate an 18,000 gal tank at both lots. Ms. Kulick said it would make more sense in a central district lot. Mr. Sutjak said that they can start at the North lot because of the rough winters. Mr. Summers asked if we have enough information if we want to go out for bids. How many buses will we need? Does this make sense? Mr. Summers suggested that the Transportation Department put a spreadsheet together to see all details. Mr. Bader said that the Board has asked for the comparison of CNG and Diesel but we can't get a reasonable return. Ms. Kulick asked if propane is safe. Ms. Van Harpen said

propane is 20 times safer than diesel tank because if a propane tank punctures, it will vaporize. Mr. Summers asked the Transportation Department to get the numbers together to see how many buses, upfront cost, tanks, etc. It sounds like something the district should be looking into.

b. Intermediate School Computer Refresh

Mr. Borosh said he submitted his proposal for J. T. Lambert and Lehman Intermediate School for the Board to review. Mr. Summers said that the proposal is to help the Board members understand what the district is trying to do. He asked if this is about the adoption of the one to one initiative. When did the Board say yes to this? Mr. Borosh said they didn't. Mr. Summers said the Board did not get an opportunity to see this proposal, which includes devices for all high school students. Next year, the district will want Chromebooks in all elementary schools as a new approach but the Board never bought into this program and now we are in it. The Board never knew that every student will get a computer. If the Board does not approve this proposal it will blow up in their faces. The Board is being asked to approve the computers for the intermediate and high schools but what about the elementary students? The main focus is on the one to one initiative for all students but the Board members never knew what was going on. Mrs. Laverdure said that we have been moving forward. She is not sure when the proposal was presented but it was done at a sub-committee. Mr. Bader said that the presentation was done along with a curriculum initiative. The Board members were told of the direction that the district intended to take and in each of the last few years has been increasing the number of laptop carts and devices to expand student access. Mrs. Laverdure said it is being implemented slowly and it is not out of the blue. Mrs. VanWhy said that the district cannot afford this initiative and for students to take home computers. Mr. Bader said the students will not take the computers home. Mrs. VanWhy said that the presentation included the students receiving computers to take home. Mr. Bader said that some principals suggested for students to take computers home but this is not being presented today. It may be an item for down the road. Mrs. VanWhy said she does not agree with this proposal. Mrs. Laverdure said that if the district does not move slowly and forward with this plan, students will not be in tune with their education. Mrs. VanWhy said she knows many students don't have to be taught about the computers. Mrs. Kulick said that we don't have to be on the cutting edge of the process but at least be in the game. Mrs. VanWhy said the district is ahead of other States. This is an expense that the district will continue to incur because every year the district will need to replace computers. Mr. Borosh said that the computers are on a four-year cycle. Ms. Kulick asked if the cycle is staggered. Mr. Borosh said it is. This year they will replace Bushkill Elementary School and East Stroudsburg Elementary School. Next year three others will be replaced. The proposal is to purchase the intermediate computers and replace them in four years. If we move forward, the high schools, intermediate schools and elementary schools will all be on the same cycle. Mr. Summers said that the Board members need time to review and understand the plan. He sees that they are adding computers in Resica Elementary and J. M. Hill Elementary. Mr. Borosh said that on page 38 of the proposal, it explains that some computers from J. T. Lambert and Lehman Intermediate will be given to Bushkill Elementary and J. M. Hill Elementary and Resica Elementary. There are also some new equipment that will be added.

c. Project Fame

Mrs. Stevens said that in response to the significant mental health crisis the district experienced last year, increased capacity for social work/counseling services is necessary at all grade levels, K-12. The Project Fame Program began in the 2007/08 school year. In 2011/12 they began the Tier 3 Service. Mr. Summers asked if the district is planning to reallocate the existing budget to expand the services of an additional social worker for the high schools. Mrs. Stevens said that in order to expand this program into the secondary level at both secondary school buildings, the district is seeking new grant monies, as well as local support, to expand and enhance our services

by entering into the secondary level to be able to continue to meet students where they are at by providing individualized treatment in the form of individual and/or group counseling within the school setting. A third social worker is necessary to meet the current demand of service need. Additional hours are being added to the two existing positions, to expand capacity at the elementary and intermediate schools. The added service would be an increase of \$81,601 from \$90,823 to \$172,424. The additional cost would not require an increase to the Pupil Services budget. It can be accommodated with reallocation of current funds. Mr. Summers said that when he saw the numbers from the survey that Mrs. Stevens provided to them, he was startled and taken back by the signs of the mental health crisis within our district. Mr. Summers said when he saw all the numbers, it may not appear like there is a problem but he is conflicted by the percentage at the high schools. 52% of 12th graders felt depressed and sad. Where did they arrive at this numbers? Was this a survey done in October by 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th graders? Mrs. Stevens said it was. They received random sampling. This survey was taken prior to the suicides that occurred. Mrs. Laverdure said this is a State survey that was given to the students in the past. Mr. Summers said that they just took the time to discuss the funds for Chromebooks but we have a crisis in the district. The district should add \$50,000 to face the mental health problem. How are we going to provide assistance for the classrooms when trying to educate the students? Schools are trying to boost moral like when they have pep rallies. Mrs. Laverdure said that the mental health problem is complicated because all parents do not want to accept counseling. Mr. Summers said that we have time to talk about buses and computers but we need to get our priorities straight. The district is not doing enough. We need to put the same amount of energy that we are spending on other issues into solving this problem. We need to fix this issue before buying anything else. Mrs. Laverdure said she agrees. Mrs. Stevens said they are trying to increase assistance without breaking the bank or having the budget go through the roof. Mrs. Laverdure said that we have a good guidance program. Mr. Summers said this is the first that he is hearing of this issue in the district. Mrs. Stevens said that this is the first year statistics for suicide was compiled and she felt the results should be shared. Mr. Summers said there are several sixth graders who are suicidal. Mrs. Stevens said they are contemplating suicide. Mrs. Laverdure said that the district also had a third grader that tried to commit suicide. Mrs. VanWhy said that it is a school-wide epidemic. Mrs. Stevens said it's very difficult to access help. This is a Monroe County issue. Ms. Kulick said that there are no facilities in this area for help. She also assisted a girl who tried to commit suicide. She asked if the students who need help are foster students. Mrs. Stevens said she does not know that information. Mrs. Stevens said she can try to see but it is a confidentiality issue. She would need consent for treatment. If a student is 14 years old or older, no parent consent is needed even if the parent says no. Ms. Kulick said that she transports many students in her ambulance with this issue and some do not have parents that accompany them. Mr. Summers said that he is recommending that they move this request to the whole Board for approval. Mrs. Laverdure said that the district is providing a training on June 14th, 15th & 16th for SAP (Student Assistant Program) to the elementary level staff.

Mrs. Judy Summers said that she worked as a psychiatric nurse for many years and sees that the district has an epidemic. She is concerned about the children who are thinking about killing themselves. Teachers are working overtime to try to reach out to them. She believes that we need a psychologist instead of a social worker because they are better equipped to help. She sees what's being spent in this area through the IU 20 but we are only reaching a small number of students. The district needs to get their priorities in order.

d. Insurance Renewals

Mr. Bader said that the majority of the insurance renewal rates are less than this year except for the Steam Boiler & Equipment and Student Athletic rates. This item will need Board approval.

e. 2016-17 Budget Update

Mr. Bader said that his presentation includes an increase in revenue of about \$181,000. On the expense side there was a decrease in the insurance and benefits, the later because of a \$200,000 reduction in our workers compensation insurance. Title 1 Grant Expenses increased due to Title 1 expenses. The Special Ed and Pupil Services budget was adjusted to include the Project Fame addition. Salaries were adjusted due to the elimination of one crossing guard and addition of 2 police officers. Other positions needed: 4 -Title 1 paras, .5 elementary and 6 elementary student aides for a total of 9.5 positions.

The total changes include a decrease of \$138,565 in the budget. The proposed final budget had a deficit of \$668,184 and the final budget has a deficit of \$529,619.

f. 2016-17 Homestead/Farmstead Exclusions

Mr. Bader said that the 2016 Homestead/Farmstead exclusion amount went from \$418.95 to \$426.67. The amount of money we receive from the State has been relatively constant the last few years, but there are 187 less properties in both counties.

g. Lehman Township Tax Collector Appointment

Mr. Bader said that the current tax collector Rose VanWhy is retiring at the end of June, 2016. They need the Board to ratify the appointment of Bonnie Wargo as Lehman Township Real Estate Tax Collector until the end of Rose VanWhy's term.

h. Elementary Math Curriculum Revision

Mr. Moran said that his department completed the review of instructional material for the math curriculum. They met with four separate vendors. The committee consisted of about 13 parents. The committee, which also included teachers and administrators, chose two out of the four by a close vote. They will determine a final vendor once they meet to discuss pricing. This new Math curriculum will be implemented in the 2017/18 school year. Some teachers will pioneer the program in 2016/17 school year. Mr. Moran will draw up a proposal, by the next Finance Committee Meeting, for professional development for teachers and support staff.

i. Countywide Reassessment

Mr. Bader said that the Monroe County Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward with the county-wide reassessment. Mrs. Laverdure said that a handful of people were present to share their concerns. Mr. Summers asked if these concerns were discussed at the Commissioners meeting in June. Mrs. Laverdure said, "Yes". She attended the meeting to present to the Commissioners the Resolution that was approved by the Board concerning the need for a countywide reassessment of properties in Monroe County.

j. Facilities Committee Items

i. Trane Contracts & Proposals

1. Renewal of Service Agreements – 5yr annual payments in advance total cost \$277,539 (Note Trane will provide the next two items at no cost with accepted proposal)
2. Software Upgrade for Bushkill - \$1,687
3. Alarming Boilers, Coolers, Freezers - \$1,265

Mr. Bader said that the Property/Facilities Committee is recommending that the district go to a five-year agreement with Trane to incur a cost savings. The payment in advance total \$277,539. This will include upgrades for Bushkill Elementary School. If the Board approves the five-year contract, Trane will do the Software Upgrade for Bushkill

Elementary School, Alarming, Boilers, Coolers and Freezers at no cost thanks to Mr. Gress inquiring if they would do so.

ii. HSS Rifle Range

1. Welding: Rim Rock Fabrications - \$5,000

2. Lead Abatement: Alicon - \$9,375

Mr. Bader said that in the Rifle range there is a metal plate area in the backstop that leaks, so it needs to be repaired since it's a safety concern. It needs to be cut out and welded. The Property/Facilities picked the lowest bidder Rim Rock Fabrications. Lead abatement is also needed and Alicon was lowest bidder to remove/dispose of items to allow Rim Rock to replace the backstop.

iii. HSS Auxiliary Gym Repairs

1. Miller Flooring - \$227,137.70

2. EHS Environmental - \$10,275 (subject to verification of cost)

Mr. Bader said that the total price of \$227,137.70 to repair the gym includes asbestos abatement. Mr. Summers asked how old is the gym floor. Mr. Bader said it's about 55 years old. This is about how long it is expected to last. Mr. Summers said that the renovated gym should last about 55 years. Mrs. Laverdure said that is what they were told.

Mr. Bader said because of the removal of the asbestos, the district received three proposals for the air monitoring. They compared each proposal and Quad 3 was the lowest bidder and will contract with them instead of EHS Environmental.

iv. Middle Smithfield Attic Insulation Request to Bid

Mr. Bader said that the truss at Middle Smithfield Elementary has been taken care of with Mold remediation which the Board members gave authorization to bid. The district now needs authorization from the whole Board to bid for the Middle Smithfield Attic Insulation

v. Replacement of HSN/LIS Café lights by District staff- \$19,196.10

Mr. Bader said that the district would like to have their staff replace the lights at H.S. North and Lehman Intermediate cafeteria at a total cost of \$19,196.10.

vi. Scissors Lift Purchase - \$7,000

Mr. Bader said that the Board previously approved the purchase of a Scissors Lift in the amount of \$4,800 but that lift was sold before the district was able to purchase it. They now have another lift for sale at a total price of \$7,000 and will hold it until June 20th for when and if it is Board approved.

vii. HSS Library Window Project – Bognet Pay App #1 \$4,160

Mr. Bader said that the H.S.S. Window Project has their 1st pay application.

Mr. Summers said that the Property/Facilities Committee discussed work needing to be done on the South Stadium. Does this require a recommendation for Board approval?

Mr. Bader said that all details need to be further looked into.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – LIMITED TO ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

None

VI. ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

1.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to recommend that the Board consider for approval the Intermediate School Computer Refresh items presented by Mr. Brian Borosh at the Finance Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by Gary Summers and passed 2-0. Lisa VanWhy voted no.

2.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to recommend that the Board consider for approval the Project Fame item presented by Mrs. Kim Stevens at the Finance Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by Gary Summers and carried unanimously, 3-0.

3.

RECOMMENDATION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Motion was made by Debbie Kulick to recommend that the Board consider for approval the following items: Motion was seconded by Gary Summers and carried unanimously, 3-0.

1. To approve the 2016-17 Insurance providers and premiums as presented in the total amount of \$1,152,599.
2. The East Stroudsburg Area School District does hereby adopt its General Fund Budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year in the amount of \$148,606,969.
3. The formal resolution as presented to the Board for the 2016 Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion.
4. To approve the appointment of the District's real estate tax collector for Lehman Township.
5. Trane Contracts & Proposals
 - a. Renewal of Service Agreements – 5-year annual payments in advance total cost \$277,539
 - b. Software Upgrade for Bushkill Elementary (No cost if 5-year Service Agreement is approved)
 - c. Alarming Boilers, Coolers, Freezers (No cost if 5-year Service Agreement is approved)
6. The proposal from Rim Rock Fabrications for the repair of the backstop at the HSS rifle range at a cost of \$5,000.
7. The proposal from Alicon Environmental, Inc. for lead abatement of the sand at the HSS rifle range at a cost not to exceed \$9,375.
8. The proposal from Miller Flooring Co., Inc. for the replacement of the auxiliary gym floor at HSS at a cost of \$227,135.70.
9. The proposal from EHS Environmental - \$10,275 (subject to verification of cost and pending a further comparison of the proposals) for asbestos abatement monitoring at the HSS auxiliary gym
10. Seeking bids for the replacement of insulation in the attic at Middle Smithfield Elementary.

11. The purchase of sixty-three (63) Highbay LED lights from Friedman Electric at a cost of \$19,196.10.
12. The purchase of a used scissors lift from United Rentals at a cost of \$7,000.
13. Pay Application #1 from Bognet, Inc. in the amount of \$4,140 for the HSS Library Window project.

VII. **NEXT MEETING** – July 12, 2016

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT** – 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia L. Rosado,
Board Secretary