

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
JUNE 25, 2024

The Board of Directors of the Hopewell Area School District conducted a virtual and in person Board meeting on Tuesday, June 25, 2024. This meeting was recorded.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Dan Santia, Board President.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Santia.

Roll call by the secretary followed. Those Directors in attendance were:

Anitre' Bell (participated at 7:16 p.m. online)

Carla Buxton
Daniel Caton
Victoria Gill
Anissa Klessner
Jeanette Miller
Bethany Pistorius
Daniel Santia
Lindsay Zupsic

Also in attendance were: Dr. Jeffrey Beltz, Superintendent, Deborah Engelman, Business Administrator; John Salopek, Solicitor; Nancy Barber, Secretary; Ed Katkich and Donna Steff, Principals; and visitors.

An Executive Session was held prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel and the required annual District threat assessment. This announcement is being made to be in compliance with Act 84 of 1986, Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law, as amended.

MOTION #1

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, to approve the agenda as written.

Mr. Santia asked for approval of minutes.

MOTION #2

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the May 28, 2024 Business meeting and the June 11, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #3

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Dan Caton, approved the Financial Reports consisting of the Tax Collection, Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements, for May 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Dr. Beltz introduced Miles Newton, the District's second school resource officer. Officer Newton is in his 19th year as a police officer, 18 of which are in Hopewell. He stated that he recently attended SRO training and he is excited to get started. Dr. Beltz thanked Chief Sedlacek for obtaining the grant and the District has a great partnership with the Township.

Mrs. Engelman presented the final General Fund budget for the 2024-2025 school year. She stated that revenues and expenditures are projected to be \$47,793,064. She also reported that the tax rate will be 11.99 mills.

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

Effective October 12, 2021, a maximum of thirty minutes total will be reserved during the Board meeting for community members who request to speak. At any time, the Board may allow additional time for the visitors portion of the Board meeting.

Whether the community member is participating virtually, or in-person, the community member will:

- State their name
- Have up to three minutes to make a statement and/or ask a question to the Board
- Only be able to speak once during the visitors portion of the board meeting
- Have their time begin when the individual begins to speak

It is recommended that community members wishing to speak during the visitors portion email the Board Secretary prior to the board meeting, however the online chat will be monitored during the visitors portion of the meeting for anyone wishing to speak.

A response may be given during the meeting, however, it is also possible that no response be provided during the Board meeting. The Board will instruct the Superintendent, the Business Administrator and/or the Solicitor to either respond to the inquiry or do further research and report back to the Board and/or the resident. For any question that requires a response, the District will contact the individual directly to respond or will share responses at the following Board meeting.

No visitors wished to address the Board.

Educational/Curriculum/Instruction by Lindsay Zupsic, Chair**MOTION #4**

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved Margaret McConnell, a student at PennWest University, to complete her school counseling practicum hours at the Junior High School during the 2024-2025 school year, under the direction of Nicole Rodgers. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #5

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Anissa Klessner, approved the renewal of PA-Educator, the District's clearinghouse for professional applications, effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 in the amount of \$2,175.00. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #6

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the continuation of the Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Hopewell Area School District and the Hopewell Education Association with respect to Family Behavioral Resources for the 2024-2025 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

Buildings and Grounds by Dan Caton, Chair**MOTION #7**

By Dan Caton, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the request of Hopewell Youth Wrestling to use Gym B at the Junior High School on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning November 12, 2024 through March 31, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #8

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of Hopewell Youth Wrestling to use the mat room at the Junior High School on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning November 12, 2024 through March 31, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #9

By Dan Caton, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the request of Hopewell Youth Wrestling to use the mat room at the Junior High School on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning November 12, 2024 through March 31, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #10

By Dan Caton, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the request of San Rocco band to use the Senior High School band room for rehearsal on July 24, 25 and 31 and August 1, 6 and 7, 2024 from 5:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Finance and Budget by Lindsay Zupsic, ChairMOTION #11

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved items (1) and (2) and to ratify item (3) as presented, in accordance with School Board's agreement for grouping items in a single motion. MOTION carried by an affirmative roll call vote of five Directors.

1. General Fund List of Bills in the amount of \$671,022.24
2. Cafeteria Fund List of Bills in the amount of \$44,212.18
3. Payments to be ratified in the amount of \$1,122,331.01

MOTION #12

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved Resolution #1-2024 a Resolution providing for adoption of the Final General Fund budget for the 2024-2025 General Fund budget, which projects revenues of \$47,793,064 and appropriations of \$47,793,064. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #13

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved Resolution #2-2024, a Resolution levying a tax during the 2024-2025 School Fiscal Year upon real estate within the territorial limits of the School District and fixing the rate thereof at 11.99 mills. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #14

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved Resolution #3-2024, a Resolution requesting the Chief County Assessor to direct the inspection and reassessment of all taxable property within the territorial limits of the School District to which major improvements were made after September 1, 2023, and not included in the tax duplicate certified to the Treasurer of the School District for the School Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #15

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved Resolution #4-2024, a Resolution authorizing rates of discounts and penalties on real estate taxes for the 2024-2025 School Fiscal Year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #16

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved Resolution #5-2024, a Resolution providing for the installment payment of real estate taxes during the School Fiscal Year 2024-2025. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #17

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved Resolution #6-2024, a Resolution reenacting for the 2024-2025 School Fiscal Year the tax upon transfers of real estate situated within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #18

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved Resolution #7-2024, a Resolution reenacting for the 2025 Calendar Year the tax upon salaries, wages, commissions, compensations, net profits, and other earned income of residents, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #19

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved Resolution #8-2024, a Resolution reenacting for the 2024-2025 School Fiscal Year the tax upon natural persons engaging in an occupation within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #20

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved Resolution #9-2024, a Resolution reenacting for the 2024-2025 School Fiscal Year the mercantile tax upon the gross receipts of wholesale and retail business activity performed or rendered within the territorial limits of the School District, the same heretofore imposed pursuant to the authority contained in the Local Tax Enabling Act. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #21

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved Resolution #10-2024, a Resolution authorizing the Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion real estate assessment reductions for the Hopewell Area School District's Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024, under the provisions of the Taxpayer Relief Act (Act 1 of 2006). MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #22

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the renew the following insurance coverage through Utica Insurance Company and UPMC (for worker's compensation) for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. This coverage will be provided through EHD Insurance Agency. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

i.	Privacy and Network Liability	\$23,578.00
ii.	General Liability/Excess Liability	\$130,732.00
iii.	Automobile	\$33,686.00
iv.	Workers Compensation	\$151,583.00

MOTION #23

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the removal of the old boiler from Margaret Ross (currently at the junior high school). All usable parts will be removed before scrapping the equipment. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #24

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the one-year contract with CSIU for the following. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Fund Accounting	\$8,833.20
Payroll	\$11,116.40
Human Resources	\$5,468.00
Student Information Systems (SIS)	\$33,593.90
*GURU Board – Zaps Only	\$1,138.50
*Annual Hosted Online Registration	\$2,173.50

MOTION #25

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the contract with The Wilson Group for two postage meters at a cost per quarter of \$1,458.00. One meter will be in the Administration Office and one at the Senior High School. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #26

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the three-year contract with Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood, LLP for yearly audits. Yearly fees are as follows. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

June 30, 2024	\$22,885.00
June 30, 2025	\$23,800.00
June 20, 2026	\$24,750.00

MOTION #27

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the purchase of a 2015 Skyjack Scissor Lift from United Rentals at a cost of \$7,950.00. Purchase price is less than the cost to repair the current lift. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #28

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, approved the contract with The Nutrition Group for food service management services. This is a one-year contract with four renewal years. Nutrition and Metz Corp were the only two vendors who participated in the RFP. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #29

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved school meal prices for the 2024-2025 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

a.	Student lunch	\$2.75
b.	Adult breakfast	\$2.85
c.	Adult lunch	\$4.10

MOTION #30

By Lindsay Zupsic, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the purchase of a John Deere 22 HP, 42" riding mower for Margaret Ross Elementary School. This is to replace the MR tractor, which is not repairable. Cost is \$2,659.05. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Personnel by Bethany Pistorius, Chair**MOTION #31**

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, approved the Official Pay Schedule for the 2024-2025 athletic season. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #32

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, accepted the resignation of Brenna Wandel, 8th Grade Club Sponsor, effective May 31, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #33

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Victoria Gill, accepted the resignations of Ray Smith and Dean Nelson, Senior High School Student Council Sponsors, effective May 31, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #34

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, accepted the resignation of Paula Battisti, 7th Grade Club Sponsor, effective May 31, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #35

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the fall coaches and salaries for the 2024-2025 school year. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #36

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the appointment of Dr. Robert Kartychak, Hopewell High School Principal, at a salary of \$122,500, effective July 1, 2024. MOTION carried by a vote of eight to one, with Mrs. Miller voting no.

MOTION #37

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the termination of employment of Frank Coulter, Bus Driver, effective June 25, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #38

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Jeanette Miller, approved the reappointment of Deborah Engelman, Treasurer, effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative roll call vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #39

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Anissa Klessner, approved the employment of Matthew Fritz, summer custodian, effective June 17, 2024. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

MOTION #40

By Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Carla Buxton, approved the Consulting Services Agreement with Donald Short for the 2024-2025 fiscal year at a rate of \$500.00 per month, effective July 5, 2024. MOTION carried by a vote of eight to one, with Mrs. Miller voting no.

Transportation by Anitre Bell, ChairMOTION #41

By Anitre Bell, seconded by Bethany Pistorius, to approve the recommendation to sell for scrap the following obsolete vans and buses. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

a.	BUS 19	2013 Chevrolet	1GB3G3BG0D1181058
b.	BUS 50	2014 International	4DRBUAANXEB418876
c.	BUS 52	2015 International	4DRBUAAN4FB708399
d.	VAN 79	2007 GMC	1GDHG35U271212278

Other Business

Mrs. Miller wanted to thank Ashley Elias and Fernando Pinto, parents of students in the District, for their support of efforts by the District, Townships and Police Departments with respect to school safety.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Beltz reported that all Draw Collective information is on the District's website and that information regarding next steps, when they have been determined, will be discussed, and announced at public meetings.

He announced that the District has received grants, through the support of Representative Josh Kail, for school safety, security, and equipment.

Dr. Beltz reported, as he is required by law to do, that he has provided the Board with the District's annual threat assessment.

Finally, he thanked John Salopek, solicitor, for his 22 years of service to the Board, as tonight would be John's last meeting. He thanked John for his insightful advice in navigating complex legal matters and negotiations, his unwavering principles and integrity, and his dedicated service to the District and Hopewell community. He also thanked Frank Pagani and Molly Patterson, associates of John's, for their hard work and diligence on behalf of the District.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Salopek confirmed that this evening would be his last as solicitor for Hopewell. He stated that he has been working in public education for 36 years, first as a school board member starting in 1988 and then as the solicitor for Hopewell for the past 22 years. He said that he has attended over 500 meetings, worked with two different Board secretaries, four different Business Administrators, five different Superintendents and over 30 different Board members. He said that public education is the backbone of American society and believes in its fundamental importance. He stated that he hoped the District will continue to strive to uphold the highest standards, ensuring that the District operates with integrity and fairness for all citizens. He encouraged the Board and Administration to keep up the fight, even when it is most difficult. It is in these challenging moments that our commitment to quality education and equal opportunities for every student is most crucial.

Mr. Santia, Board President, thanked John for his service. He said that they did not always agree, but that he always learned from John.

Upcoming Board Meetings

July 9, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – Board Room and Virtual

MOTION by Bethany Pistorius, seconded by Lindsay Zupsic, that the meeting be adjourned. MOTION carried unanimously by an affirmative vote of all Directors in attendance.

Mr. Santia adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Daniel Santia, Board President

Nancy Barber, Secretary