

BETHLEHEM AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

A Special Board Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bethlehem Area School District was held on Monday, December 19, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in the Dining Room of the Education Center, 1516 Sycamore Street, Bethlehem, PA. SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

President Faccinetto called for the roll: MEMBERS PRESENT

Members present: Directors Bonilla, Burkhardt, Cann, Follweiler, McKeon, Ortiz, Vidanage, and President Faccinetto – 8

Others present: Dr. Joseph Roy, Superintendent of Schools; Stacy Gober, Board Secretary; administrators, members of the press and other interested citizens and staff members. OTHERS PRESENT

At this point of the meeting, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Faccinetto requested a moment of silent meditation. MOMENT OF SILENCE

President Faccinetto offered Courtesy of the Floor to visitors. Speakers are asked to come to the podium, stating their name and address. Public comment in the first session is limited to 30 minutes and is for agenda items only. The second Courtesy of the Floor will be for any district concerns or business. Speakers are limited to three minutes each. The board requests that, when possible, all individuals supporting a like position on a topic select a speaker to present their views to avoid repetition. If that is not possible, all are welcome to speak. As per school board policy, generally, speakers are limited to taxpayers, residents, or employees of this school district. At the conclusion of the special school board meeting, another block of time will be allocated for public comment. At that time, the same rules will apply. It is asked that speakers observe proper decorum, without personal attacks towards a specific individual or individuals. It is not the custom for the board to enter into a dialogue at these meetings about concerns. However, the board does listen with care to issues raised. Speakers will receive responses, in some form, by the administration. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR TO VISITORS

President Faccinetto stated: Do we have any visitors wishing to speak on agenda items only and that would include the appointment tonight.

Judy Dexter
1866 Homestead Avenue
Bethlehem, PA

Mrs. Dexter stated: I wanted to address you just a little bit tonight, I know that you are in a very difficult spot in the position of having to elect a new board member, and reflect just for a minute about what kind of qualities you might want to have in a board member, and in the same vein, what kind of qualities you might not like to have. I don't know any of the three applicants personally. I have never had a conversation with any of them about anything that I know of. I might of said hello to them or waved at them if I saw them.

I don't know, but I do want to say this, I want to talk about what I think is the "elephant in the room." We have two newly seated board members who have received substantial contributions from people who have a significant crossover with Mayor Callahan. I looked at the last financial reports of the two newest elected school board members, and I see thousands of dollars have crossed into their campaign coffers from people who would normally I think not have a very significant interest in the business of the Bethlehem Area School Board. There is an attorney from New Jersey, and a businessman involved with TCSC Holdings from Orefield. When I googled those along with the name of John Callahan, I found that there is some significant congruency, some of the same individuals have given heavily to Mr. Callahan's campaigns as well.

Tonight we have one of the candidates, was at one time a candidate for City Council and that is Mr. Sanders. When he ran, he received a very large contribution from friends of Callahan or an organization that supports John Callahan, and I want all of you to ask yourselves, why this is? The question that I have for each of you, to find in your hearts, are there votes for sale or influence on this school board, and is there an attempt by a politician named John Callahan to influence others to give contributions, or to give contributions himself, or ask his campaign committee to do so. What I am speaking about specifically is the question whether the Martin Tower TIF may again come before this board. A very difficult issue, I am looking at it right now, I see Mr. Reynolds walked into the room, some of this community say, well that is the alter ego of the mayor. I don't know if it is or not, because I am not that versed in all the city politics. But, I am just suggesting to you now, that there may be a good reason why Mr. Sanders has asked to be seated on the school board, and I ask you to consider in your hearts whether during his interviews he reflected the kind of knowledge that is needed to make informed votes on this school board. He didn't know much about charter schools. He couldn't answer that question. And most of the questions that he responded to he had to draw from his own personal experience as a father and a grandfather. Other people have applied as well who have qualifications, including financial qualifications that may help him to address some of the very significant and difficult issues, one of the most significant and difficult issues is the finance of this district. So, overall, I am asking each of you to consider very carefully your vote tonight and ask yourselves when you choose a candidate, what are the qualifications that are attractive about that candidate

and also are there any qualifications or baggage that that candidate may bring to the seat on the board that we citizens do not wish to see on this school board. Thank you.

Steven Antalics
737 Ridge Street
Bethlehem, PA

Mr. Antalics stated: I am sure you have made up your minds, and I just want to add this, based upon the absence of Mrs. Leeson and Mr. Tenaglia from the board, from past board meeting and what has been added to by other board members, I think there will be deficiency and oversight on financial matters. Of the three candidates that I listened to, what impressed me about one candidate was financial background and talking to a number of people, some on the board, they are seriously bothered by a conflict of interest, the fact that this gentleman has a wife who is an employee of the district. Now, it could be conflict of interest, it could not be conflict of interest. If it is conflict of interest, there is a policy known as recusing yourself from an action, which might impact upon that person's spouse. Of the three candidates from what I have just said, I feel the board needs someone with financial background to extend that oversight that is now lost by Mr. Tenaglia, who very good at that and Mrs. Leeson, who took a tiger approach once she got teeth in your calf, she didn't let go until it was resolved. So I am just merely saying that from my point of view that the conflict of interest possibly is a lesser issue than what the contribution will be to the board in terms of financial oversight, and I think the board needs that professional oversight. Thank you.

President Faccinnetto asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak at courtesy of the board. Seeing none, we will move into President Communications.

President Faccinnetto stated: I just would like to announce that we will have an executive session immediately following the meeting tonight, and another development was that last time we had announced that Director Cann would serve as the Recreation Committee Representative, but she cannot because she is not a resident of the City of Bethlehem. Director Follweiler will take over in Director Cann's role as Recreation Commission Representative.

PRESIDENT'S
COMMUNICATIONS

President Faccinnetto asked if anyone had any unfinished business they would like to bring up at this time.

UNFINISHED
BUSINESS

Seeing none, President Faccinnetto stated that we will move on to Recommendations of the Administration.

President Faccinetto asked for a motion to accept the Recommendations of the Administration (Items 1, 2, 3, and 4)

RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE
ADMINISTRATION

Director Bonilla made a motion to accept the Recommendations of the Administration. Director Ortiz seconded the motion.

President Faccinetto asked if there were any items to be pulled for discussion.

Dr. Roy stated: Can I just mention one minor correction on page 2, number 2, on the assignment is listed incorrectly as a Freedom Teacher, and it is a Liberty Science Teacher. It was just the assignment everything else is correct.

President Faccinetto stated: Seeing no items to pull for discussion, may we have a roll call vote to accept Item #1, 2, 3, and 4.

The question was called with roll call as follows: Yea, Directors Bonilla, Burkhardt, Cann, Follweiler, McKeon yea Items 1, 3, and 4, Abstain Item #2, Ortiz, Vidanage and President Faccinetto.

Items 1, 3, and 4 – Pass – 8-0

Item 2 – Passes 7-0-1

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION – December 19, 2011

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2. *Resignation*

RECOMMENDATION:

A. Instructional

	NAME	ASSIGNMENT	REASON	EFFECTIVE
1.	White, Maria	Freedom Spanish Teacher	Retirement	January 14, 2012

3. *Nominations*

RECOMMENDATION:

A. Instructional

The following instructional staff has been recalled for the 2011-2012 school year.

	EMPLOYEE	ASSIGNMENT	SALARY	EFFECTIVE
1.	DiCarlo, Darlene	Freedom Spanish Teacher	\$43,602, prorated Bachelor's, Step 3	January 17, 2012
2.	Liberto, Kelly	Governor Wolf (.5) Kindergarten/ (.5) Reading Teacher	\$43,602, prorated Bachelor's, Step 3	January 17, 2012

B. Noninstructional

The following noninstructional staff has been recalled for the 2011-2012 school year.

	EMPLOYEE	ASSIGNMENT	SALARY	EFFECTIVE
1.	Pastor, Mark	Liberty Monitor	\$16,109, prorated	December 20, 2011

C. Miscellaneous

	NAME	ASSIGNMENT	SALARY
1.	DeJesus, Migdalia	Afterschool Program Coordinator Donegan 2011-2012 school year	\$15.00 per hour not to exceed 12 hours per week (grant funded)
2.	Radocha, Jerry	Coach – Assistant Boys Basketball Liberty	\$4,242.00
3.	Washitzko, Gary	Coach – Assistant Boys Basketball Liberty	\$4,242.00
4.	Muller, Michael	LA/MP Teacher	\$33.79 per hour
5.	McCauley, Justin	Permanent Day-by-Day Substitute Liberty	\$100.00 per day effective December 20, 2011

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION – December 19, 2011

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4. *Reassignment*

RECOMMENDATION:

A. *Noninstructional*

	NAME	FROM/TO	SALARY	EFFECTIVE
1.	Rolly, Lori Ann	From: Hanover (.5) Teacher Assistant, Special Education, Learning Support To: Miller Heights, 1.0 Teacher Assistant Special Education, Learning Support	\$15.94 per hour	January 3, 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE BOARD

President Faccinetto stated: Moving on to Recommendations of the Board, we have three candidates who have successfully applied and interviewed last Monday for the vacancy on the school board. At this time I would like to entertain nominations for any of those candidates.

Director Cann made a motion to nominate Mrs. Patrick. Director McKeon seconded the motion.

Director Bonilla made a motion to nominate Mr. Sanders. Director Ortiz seconded the motion.

Director Follweiler made a motion to nominate Mr. Weikert. Director Burkhardt seconded the motion.

President Faccinetto stated: All three candidates were nominated so we will now take a vote on the candidates. The procedure will be that the candidate who receives five votes will receive the appointment. If after the first round of voting no one has five votes, the person with the lowest amount of votes will be dropped, and we will re-vote on the remaining two, and we will continue to vote until someone gets a majority which is five votes.

At this point, is there any discussion on any of the candidates that anyone would like to say before voting.

Director Burkhardt stated: I would just like to, although I understand, the public's right to share and expect them to share their thoughts with us, I am thankful that we have had three people who were willing to even step forward. I don't see a huge number of candidates for school board even in the general elections when they are supposed to be held. So I thank all three members of the community who have taken time and are understanding how much and what the responsibilities are for this position, and we can only elect one, that is just the name of the game, but I do appreciate all three of the people and I see they are all present this evening. I thank them for being part of the process.

President Faccinetto stated: Does anyone else wish to say anything.

Director Ortiz stated: I just want to say that regardless of who occupies the vacancy, we as members of the school board, I think we don't have any agendas. I hope whatever decision we make is based on our approvals of the candidate, and to suggest that anybody on this board has any particular agenda, I think is out of the question. I think all of these people are here to take their time, their effort to come here, and they give it some time, so I don't think we have any specific agendas.

President Faccinetto stated: I would like to echo what both Mr. Burkhardt and Mrs. Ortiz said, and I think we had three fantastic candidates, and I think the board would be well served with any one of them being appointed. This has

been a very difficult decision for me that I have agonized with all weekend, and honestly walking in the door tonight I don't know that I made my decision yet which is interesting. I think that says something for the candidates. The Mr. Sanders that I know runs a successful business and has several properties in the city, and I have become friends for several years now, and I think really is a good spokesperson for the district and likes and respects the district and has a little shrine to his grandchildren and the success of the school district in his store, and that is a great thing that we need, and I had every intention that Mr. Sanders was my person that I wanted to see on the board as I had supported him last time and then we had our interviews. Mrs. Patrick really stood out to me as a young, energetic, enthusiastic person who is open to running, and really, I kind of saw the reason that I first ran for the board with a young child getting ready to come into the school system, and that really spoke to me, and I still even at this minute I agonize over the vote and just want you to know it is not an easy decision. I think every one on the board does take it very seriously and tries to weigh all options when we do this. Thank you to all three of you for applying.

If there is no other discussion, Mrs. Gober can we have our first vote. Please state the name of the candidate you are supporting.

Director Burkhardt – Shannon Patrick
Director Cann – Shannon Patrick
Director Follweiler – David Weikert
Director McKeon – Shannon Patrick
Director Ortiz – Mr. Sanders
Director Vidanage – Mr. Sanders
Director Bonilla – Mr. Sanders
President Faccinetto – Shannon Patrick

Mrs. Gober stated: We have four votes for Mrs. Patrick; three votes for Mr. Sanders; one vote for Mr. Weikert.

President Faccinetto stated: We need five votes, so we will drop Mr. Weikert, and we will continue to vote one more time on Mr. Sanders and Mrs. Patrick.

Any additional discussion prior to voting.

Seeing none, Mrs. Gober can we have another roll call please.

Director Burkhardt – Mrs. Patrick
Director Cann – Mrs. Patrick
Director Follweiler – Mrs. Patrick
Director McKeon – Mrs. Patrick
Director Ortiz – Mr. Sanders
Director Vidanage – Mr. Sanders
Director Bonilla – Mr. Sanders

President Faccinetto – Mrs. Patrick

Mrs. Gober stated: Now there are five votes for Mrs. Patrick and three votes for Mr. Sanders.

President Faccinetto stated: Thank you very much. Shannon congratulations.

Director Burkhardt stated: May I make a recommendation that we accept her appointment by acclamation?

President Faccinetto stated: All in favor of accepting Mrs. Patrick's nomination to fill our vacancy, please say aye, any opposed. Hearing none, we will finish our meeting and ask you to come forward and present you with the oath of office.

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE BOARD – December 19, 2011

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1. *Appointment of New Board Member*

INFORMATION:

At the December 5, 2011, Board Reorganization Meeting, a Board vacancy occurred as Director Cann had won both the At Large seat and the Region 2 seat in the recent elections held on November 8, 2011. Director Cann announced that she would take the At Large seat on the Board, which opens up a vacancy for the Region 2 seat.

On November 28, 2011, a Notice was advertised indicating that the Board of School Directors for the Bethlehem Area School District was seeking applicants for an “anticipated” vacancy on the Board for Region 2 (consisting of Bethlehem City, Northampton County Wards 7, 8, 9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 14-1, 15-1, Lehigh County Wards 11, 12-1, 12-2, 13-2, 13-3, 13-4, 13-5, 13-6, 13-7, 13-8, and Hanover Township). Residents of Region 2 who were interested in applying for the position of School Director were required to submit the appropriate paperwork by 12:00 p.m. on December 8, 2011, to the Board Secretary. The Board Secretary received three (3) applications for the position of School Director.

On December 12, 2011, following the Regular Board Meeting at East Hills Middle School, public interviews were conducted. The following candidates were interviewed:

1. Shannon L. Patrick
2. David P. Sanders
3. David A. Weikert

The candidate selected to fill the vacancy shall serve until the term ends the first Monday in December 2013.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of School Directors appoints _____ as the School Director to fill the vacancy that was created from November’s election results and will serve until the term ends the first Monday in December 2013.

President Faccinnetto asked if there was any new or miscellaneous business. Seeing none, we will move on to Courtesy of the Floor to visitors

NEW/MISCELLANEOUS
BUSINESS

President Faccinnetto asked if anyone would like to speak at courtesy of the floor.

COURTESY OF THE
FLOOR

Mr. Antalics
737 Ridge Street
Bethlehem, Pa

Mr. Antalics stated: I had the pleasure of having a rather extensive conversation with the gentlemen, an epidemiologist and a medical doctor who serves on the President council on environmental issue. The gentleman is also dean of the school of public health in the State University of New York. During discussion he was quite surprised, deeply surprised that a simple measurement with a goust meter was not done at the school, which would have, been step number one based upon the issue arising. Very simple and no need for extraneous studies but find out what is the level of microwave fallout. A goust meter would do that, very simple. He then was able to forward to me a number of references of studies being done from the American Journal of Epidemiology, one in Sweden and one in Colorado. One is entitled *Magnetic Fields and Cancer in Children Residing Near Swedish High Voltage Power Lines*, the second being, *Electrical Wiring Configuration and Childhood Cancer*, both allude to a very clear danger and sited some examples of leukemia being contracted by the children. They are talking about levels of strengths of the high tension lines and the lines parallel to Freemansburg fall in those guidelines. I was told by the gentleman who was the expert in this field for the President Consol, he said he believes it is likely up to 30 percent of all childhood cancers come from exposure to EMF's. Are any of those childhood cancers Bethlehem residents? I don't know. I called St. Luke's. I've called a number of people. I finally got an official at the American Cancer Institute, and he became quite interested based upon what I told him, and he also knew the gentlemen that has been assisting me and he said he would undergo a study to see a frequency of cancers resulting from this source and look at them geographically and he would try to narrow it down to Northampton County. This will take some time but from the last board meeting last week I was told that a measurement would be made as of last week. I haven't heard anything, but that measurement simple as it is, could have been made the first moment the issue came up without rationalization that we have go to look into this and that. What I have told you is factual. So, I hope when the measurement is made and the information I get back from the American Cancer Society that our kids are safe. I really hope. As I mentioned last board meeting, I am deeply disturbed and concerned why that simple measurement was not made when the issue came up. Thank you.

Mr. Sanders
6 East Washington Avenue
Bethlehem, Pa

I would just like to thank the board for the time and the courtesy they gave to the three candidates. I would like to congratulate the candidate that won, and it is not an easy decision to make. And, yes, the truth is I am friends with Mayor John Callahan. And I have been proud to be friends with Mayor John Callahan and Don Cunningham who has brought a huge change to our city. But it is the first time I have ever been accused of having a big checkbook. Thank you, good night and God Bless.

John William Reynolds
34 West Elizabeth Avenue
Bethlehem, Pa

Mr. Reynolds stated: As many of you know, I do sit up on one of these boards. When people say I didn't plan on speaking tonight, when I got up I never believed them that is the case here. I have a couple things, one is I want to welcome Mrs. Patrick to the Board, but first I do want to respond just briefly to what Mrs. Dexter had said before. As many of you know, I would go out on a limb and say with the possible exception to Mr. Burkhardt's family, I don't think there has been a family more dedicated to public education in the Bethlehem Area School District then the Reynolds family, the last thirty years. There was a Reynolds child up until 2011 at Liberty for the past 20 years. If you looked at Northeast, Thomas Jefferson PTA's, there probably wasn't a year that went by that the Reynolds family wasn't involved there and to characterize me or anybody else as being here for a certain reason completely misses the boat, and I think it is unfair and it is wrong. I think that during my time, not only as a citizen, but also when I worked for state representative Steve Samuelson and now that public education and this is what I kind of want to transition to, this is a crucial time for public education, and Mrs. Patrick is joining the board at a time when public education is at a crossroads. It is supposed to be the great equalizer in this country and in this state and as you know, you have very big issues on your plate. There are very big issues in front of you as far as funding, charter schools, vouchers, the whole nine yards and the idea of keeping that hope alive. I received a fantastic education in the BASD and believe it or not, it does extend beyond one small issue that had nothing to do with me showing up tonight. As a property owner, as a citizen, as someone as I said went to school in Bethlehem, the hypothetical children that I plan to have in the future will also go to BASD, public schools. I walked to every school I ever went to, and to think that I was here some how to influence or anything else, is not only wrong, but also it is offensive. So once again, I do want to thank all of you for the job you do.

Mr. Burkhardt also hit on an important point before, when he said that and there is not a long line of people lining up to run for school board because you

have a thankless job. And almost instantly once you get on there, you get attacked, people say you are making the wrong decisions, but I am rest assured and I think that other people are as well, is that the board is making up for some past mistakes, and I want to thank all of you for all of your service as I said and once again it is something that I heard in high school from the owner of the dairy store was when Bethlehem goes, Liberty High School goes and I think that can now extend, Freedom has grown as well, to the both. Once again I want to welcome Mrs. Patrick to the board, and I want to thank you all for your service, and like I said we have really crucial issues so even if you disagree, understand that we can't be having some of the internal vowels that the citizen have seen in the last 10 years on this board just because the crossroads to public education is at ion this country and in this state. Once again, I want to thank you and to welcome Mrs. Patrick. I am sure she will be a great addition. Thank you.

President Faccinnetto asked if there were any items for discussion in Open Forum. OPEN FORUM

Director McKeon stated: Last Monday night I forgot to say there was an article in the paper about the Lehigh woman's basketball program going over and performing some great social services to some of our families, and I think the newspaper article gave them recognition, and I think we as board and myself I was very impressed with the article and I want to thank Mrs. Troyan and her crew at Lehigh.

Mr. Vidanage stated: I was very disturbed when I heard some of the reports during the last 10 days about what is going on in the school district. We have a responsibility of educating 14,000 students, and if three or four students can take a high percentage of our attention, we are not doing justice for the rest of the students. Most of them parents send their students thinking that we will help them and so forth. So I think we should have a zero tolerance policy for this kind of misbehavior. I hope the board and the officials will make sure that this problem is addressed, and I just don't understand because if two percent of the kids want to be the class jokers and for an 18-week class if they take 20 minutes of the teachers time, what do you do for the rest of them? So, we should have a zero tolerance policy, and if this is the kind of behavior they have in society, they better go back and learn how to behave before coming to school because we have no responsibility in babysitting these kids and their misbehaviors. I am not going to be commenting anymore. Thank you!

President Faccinnetto asked Mrs. Patrick to come forward.
Mrs. Vargas is a public notary who can administer the oath for you.

SHANNON PATRICK
SWEARING IN

Mrs. Vargas stated: Repeat after me, I, Shannon Patrick, do solemnly swear to support, obey and defend the constitution of the United States, the constitution of this commonwealth, and that I will discharge the duties of my office with fidelity.

Mr. Faccinetto stated: We will be going into executive session immediately following this to discuss a legal matter and personnel. ADJOURNMENT

President Faccinetto asked for a motion for adjournment.
Motion - Director Follweiler moved to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Attest,

Stacy M. Gober
Secretary

SMG:pag