

BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

Newville, Pennsylvania

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, MARCH 15, 2010

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I. CALL TO ORDER

The Committee of the Whole of the Board of School Directors for the Big Spring School District met in the Big Spring High School Large Group Room, Room 140, at 7:02 P.M. with President Wilbur Wolf, Jr., presiding. Seven (7) directors present: Wilbur Wolf, Jr., President; William Swanson, Vice President; Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary; Terry Lopp, Treasurer; Tarin Houpt; Richard Norris; and Richard Roush.

Kingsley Blasco and William Piper were absent.

Others in attendance: Richard Fry, Superintendent; Jeanne Temple, Assistant Superintendent; Kevin Roberts, Director of Curriculum/Instruction and Educational Technology; Richard E. Kerr, Jr., Business Manager; Rick Sample, Director of Buildings and Grounds; Denny Clopper, The Valley Times-Star; Dustin Coover, The News-Chronicle; and Brenda Line, Board Minutes.

II. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. ClearChoice Energy

At the March 1, 2010 Board meeting, Members of the Board of School Directors were provided with copies of a six-page document entitled "ClearChoice Energy, Demand Response Program for Schools." Please refer to the attached document.

This evening, Ms. Carolyn Pengidore, President/CEO of ClearChoice Energy, offered a presentation and a folder of information regarding the ClearChoice program. Please refer to the attached folder.

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II. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS (Continued)

A. ClearChoice Energy (Continued)

Ms. Pengidore reviewed the information in the folder, including a letter to the Big Spring School District from Ms. Pengidore dated March 15, 2010, regarding PJM Demand Response. The letter outlines the ClearChoice Energy emergency curtailment history for the past six years as well as details regarding Big Spring's participation in the program for the summer of 2010. Ms. Pengidore estimates that the District could earn approximately \$54,000 in 2010 and \$34,000 in 2010. Please refer to the letter for program details.

Ms. Pengidore reviewed the above-mentioned letter and answered questions. The following additional items were noted.

1. ClearChoice is a private entity that operates under federal regulations.
2. The company is funded from the administrative fee that is part of every kilowatt hour sold by electric companies. This fee is imbedded in the rate for every electric bill sent to a customer. The fees from this charge are normally paid to power plants; however, with increasing electricity costs, the federal government told the electricity industry that the market must be opened up to allow consumers who are willing to reduce electric consumption at critical times to share in the revenue from that fee.
3. Companies such as ClearChoice have been formed in the past few years as the result of mandates by the federal government regarding energy conservation. These companies assist in preventing brownouts and blackouts during high energy-consumption periods, especially in July and August.
4. For the summer of 2009, ClearChoice will pay approximately \$1 million to school districts across the state that participated in the program.
5. Districts are not expected to participate in the program on weekends or holidays.
6. The agreement with ClearChoice is a revenue-sharing program.
7. There is additional reimbursement (above Big Spring's estimated \$54,000.00 in 2010 and \$34,000.00 in 2011) for times the District would be asked to shut down electric use. If the District incurs costs for a backup generator or staff hours during a shutdown, the District would be reimbursed for those costs as well. In addition, an energy charge is paid for the actual hours reduced.
8. The District's reimbursement estimation was based in historical data of the District's peak electricity usage. Two District buildings were tested.
9. Big Spring School District was enrolled in the ClearChoice Energy program as of March 1, 2010.
10. Normal peak hours the District could experience a shutdown would be June 1 through September 30 between noon and 8:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, never on a holiday or weekend. Actual times Districts have been asked to shut down in the past have been late July and early August as early as 1:00 P.M. and as late as 7:30 P.M.

President Wolf thanked Ms. Pengidore for her presentation.

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II. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS (Continued)

B. Newville Elementary School Update

Mr. Sample provided the members of the Board of School Directors with copies of a five-page document entitled "March 15, 2010 Newville Elementary School Renovation Project Update." Please refer to the attached document.

Mr. Sample reviewed the document and answered questions.

The following additional items were noted:

1. Hillos-Carnes tested various items, including the site compacting, to ensure these items meet project specifications.
2. Playground equipment was removed and will be reinstalled by District personnel when the grounds are ready for re-installation.
3. A noise study will be conducted prior to geothermal well drilling during school hours.
4. The entrances at Steelstown Road have been cut in, one for buses and one for private traffic.
5. A new dropdown screen for the Newville Elementary School construction/renovation project, including photographs, will be created on the Newville Elementary School Web site. The project information is currently found on the business department section of the District's Web site.

C. DocuShare

Mr. Kerr indicated that information shared with the Board via DocuShare is now encrypted, and Board members may access this information from home. Board members will continue to be provided in pdf format copies of the Board agenda information. Hard copies of the information are available upon request..

In response to a question from Director Barrick, Mr. Kerr indicated that hotlinks are imbedded in the agenda.

At this time electronic comments cannot be made in the agenda; however, hard copies of the agenda are available on which comments could be written.

III. PREVIEW OF THE AGENDA

A. Combine and Address

President Wolf requested that the Board address XIII., NEW BUSINESS, A., PERSONNEL CONCERNS, Items A-1 through A-6, as a single action item.

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III. PREVIEW OF THE AGENDA (Continued)

B. Upper Frankford Settlement

In response to a question from President Wolf, Mr. Kerr indicated that the Upper Frankford real estate tax settlement has been closed out for the year. There are a couple "irregularities" the business office is trying to address.

Mr. Kerr added that the real estate tax year has "largely closed out." The earned income tax collected is less than the same period for the prior year; however, the "expenditures continue to do well."

C. PSERS Resolution

In response to a question from President Wolf, Mr. Fry indicated that the Board's resolution urging PSERS reform would be distributed to key communicators and local legislators. In addition, there would be a link created on the District's Web site with PSERS information and updates.

President Wolf indicated that the recent work on PSERS reform includes a more comprehensive breakdown of the proposal that "makes more sense" than before.

Superintendent Fry indicated that the two-tiered process is evolving and now includes immediate as well as long-term solutions.

In response to a question from Director Barrick, Mr. Fry indicated that this issue has some support in terms of State Representative Glen Grell's bill. Legislation on this issue has been introduced in the Senate by State Senator Gene Yaw. It appears the issue is being discussed in conjunction with budget deliberations.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Lopp to adjourn to Executive Session to address negotiations issues. Roll call vote: Voting Yes: Houpt, Norris, Roush, Lopp, Barrick, Swanson, and Wolf. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 P.M.



Robert Lee Barrick, Secretary