



South Fayette Township School District

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, November 26, 2024
7:30 PM

MINUTES

The Committee Meeting of the South Fayette Township Board of School Directors was called to order at 7:57 p.m. in the Studio in the High School by President Tom Iagnemma with the Pledge of Allegiance. President Iagnemma apologized for the late start announcing the Board held an Executive Session prior to the start of the meeting to discuss personnel and/or legal issues.

Present: Esther Cardillo, Rebecca Bruce, William Gray, Len Fornella, Joe Welch, Tom Iagnemma, Jen Iriti, Prajakta Pantankar

Virtual: Teresa Burroughs

Others: Chris Voltz, Tucker Arensberg, P.C., Superintendent Dr. Michelle Miller, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler, Director of Finance Brian Tony, Director of Finance Ryan Neely, Director of Human Resources Mike Radage, Director of Technology Rob Warfield, Superintendent's Assistant/Board Secretary Susan Vasalani

Athletic Director Mark Keener recognized the 2024 WPIAL Champions Girls Soccer Team. The team held a 20-4 overall record with 10-0 in section play before becoming WPIAL champions. Coach Nick Rosser, along with Captains Mia Patel and Jillian Warchol were in attendance to accept the recognition.

Director of Finance Ryan Neely presented information related to the Act 1 Index.

- The Act 1 Index for the 2025-2026 school year was set at 5.2% for our district, meaning that the district is permitted to raise millage by up to this percent, if the Board chooses, without using any exceptions to our budget process. The Act 1 resolution going before the Board on is to not exceed that index amount.

Intermediate School Project Update - Dan Engen, DRAW Architects

- The geotechnical investigation is complete.
- 90% construction documents are completed, internal coordination reviews have begun.
- December 2 - submission to the municipality for the final code and permit approval
- December 5 - final design verification meeting with the administration and staff
- December 11 - Board adoption of the Act 34 maximum project cost numbers
- December 13 - construction documents 100% complete
- January 2025 - public bidding for construction
- January 21 - Act 34 hearing
- February 2025 - receive project construction bids

Dr. Miller invited the public to attend the Act 34 hearing pertaining to the construction project on January 21, 2025, in the High School Studio at 6:30 p.m.

Property Update - Solicitor Chris Voltz

- A resolution authorizing the condemnation of approximately 33 acres of land is before the Board because the district's educational programming and enrollment continues to grow. Acquisition of a portion of the neighboring property could allow the district to meet its growing needs. The district

was interested when representatives of the land owner approached the district to sell a portion of the land.

- While the property owner has been cooperative and engaging during the process, the main price has not been agreed upon. The district is a public entity using public funds and must justify spending. The district offered a purchase price in line with the property appraisal. By law, the district cannot pay more than the amount set forth by the appraisal.
- The Board has received and considered many comments when deciding whether to proceed with eminent domain. When the Board acts, its goal will be to improve the school district and act in a way that will best serve our community and the decision will be made after careful and detailed deliberation and debate.

Burroughs seconded Welch on President Iagnemma's request for a motion to remove item 6 under the business section of the agenda, the condemnation in fee simple of the property discussed by Solicitor Voltz.

Roll Call Vote

Yes - Burroughs, Gray, Fornella, Iagnemma

No - Bruce, Iriti, Wech, Patankar, Cardillo

Item 6 under Business remained on the agenda for a vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

Iriti seconded Welch on the approval of the Minutes from the following Board Meetings:

Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Special Meeting

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

And on the approval of the following Financial Reports which have been reviewed by the Superintendent and Secondary Administration:

Athletic Fund

Mark Keener

High School Activity Fund

Ryan Neely

Middle School Activity Fund

Ryan Neely

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Brian Tony, and Tax Collector Kevin Biber for Board approval of the provided list of Real Estate Refunds due to reduction in assessment and/or overpayment.

And on the authorization for payment of monthly invoices from the General Fund for the amount of \$1,112,558.95 beginning with check number 78569 through check number 79142 and the Construction Fund for the amount of \$189,751.55 beginning with check number 81200049 through check number 81200053, and the Cafeteria Fund for \$122,912.09 beginning with check number 8797 through check number 8808.

Voice Vote - All Yes

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

Carolyn Potts, 291 Sygan Road. If I'm understanding it correctly, most of you are going to vote no to taking the property by eminent domain, which, if that's the case, I thank you very much. I want to let you know that over the past week this has been extremely stressful on my family. My father-in-law, who's in his eighties, my mother-in-law, his brothers, my children. I voted for every one of you on this Board, every single one. Not one of you got a no vote for me when it was at the polls because I hoped, and I felt

that you all would do the right thing. That's why I vote for you. I vote for you because you're a lifelong resident, and you should look out for lifelong residents, and I vote for the newer people because they're new to the district, and they should also have a voice, and where the district is going it just shouldn't be the lifelong or the original South Fayette, or whatever anybody wants to call each other in this township. We just can't take things that aren't ours. We don't teach our children that that's not what we are. That's not who we're about. So thank you.

Cody Duane Potts, 280 Union Avenue. I serve as a treasurer for the South Fayette Republican party. I am also the grandson of Dwayne and Harvey Potts whose land is currently at risk of being taken. I want to express my strong opposition to this action as part of my effort to protect our family's 4th generation farm. I want to assure you that I'll be actively working on election day to mobilize voters against those who support this land grab. I plan to have representatives at every precinct in South Fayette distributing sample ballots urging constituents to vote against. Additionally, I will be personally reaching out to low propensity voters and encouraging them to request mail-in ballots and to vote early against candidates who oppose or support this decision. Much like I did in the past Presidential election. Please know that I am fully committed to ensuring those who support this unjust action will face consequences at the poll. I will work tirelessly to ensure that voters are informed, and this issue is addressed in the upcoming election. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing a resolution that honors the rights of our community and protects our families.

Dave Potts, 291 Sygan Road. I find it extremely troubling that this vote seems to have been scheduled right before the holidays to keep it off the radar of the community while they are focusing on family and friends. I feel that I'm a fairly neutral person when it comes to looking at all views. One of the biggest things I can see is that this use of eminent domain is setting a dangerous precedent that directly affects the community as a whole. Where does it stop? Surely it won't stop at 291 Sygan Road. A few of us were able to speak last week, and voiced serious concerns of the overreaching authority being used to take the farm where I grew up and currently reside. This is a land that the School Board truly only wants and does not need. Since last week's meeting we have reached out to the community to spread awareness and to ask for their support. People were shocked to learn that you, the Board, are trying to do what you're trying to do to our family. I must say that it was the best few hours I have had in a long time. I saw great concern from my neighbors, many of which are here tonight. Many of those community members attempted to reach board members via email and received undeliverable messages. Where is accountability of the Board? If you will not answer any questions, address concerns, or simply reply? After seeing many versions of the plans the district has used our tax dollars to pay for, there is no justification for the Board to vote tonight to start the eminent domain process. Anyone voting? Yes, it is grossly misusing the power entrusted to them by the community. As I said before, where does it stop? Part of South Fayette's mission statement is to improve students, is to inspire students to be ethical, empathetic, and dynamic citizens. So I wonder how does tonight's vote reflect those values to students and the community? It seems that South Fayette's values have changed since I graduated, do the right thing. Vote no on condemnation of our land. I also would like to refer to any other community members who want to come in and speak up about this issue. I greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

Emily Potts, 291 Sygan Road. I would like to start by saying the community is here, and we are watching, and we will continue to watch. I'm a South Fayette graduate of the class of 2017, and I strongly urge the School Board to vote no to the use of eminent domain. Tradition, pride, excellence, dignity, respect, fairness, are all values taught to me in this building. Eminent domain has a dark history of being abused by government entities, and has been a threat to property owners since the beginning of the country. In a landmark case, the dissenting opinion argued by Justice O'Connor described the harm placed onto those that have little to gain and benefit those with influence and power. It is the responsibility of every School Board member to review and fully understand the implications that eminent domain has on the landowners, emotionally and financially, as well as the trust of every property, owner and taxpayer in the district. In 2018 the school district purchased over a hundred acres of land directly across from the middle school for 4.33 million dollars. As stated by the former School Board President Alan Vezzi in the *Almanac*, I quote, the acreage is more than the current campus takes up, and the purchase is to secure the land and keep the district's options open. End quote. The board already has been presented with several options, including six configurations on the current campus and

two options using the land you've already purchased. All cost estimates have been presented as similar costs to the district. To this point the district has paid two architects for drawings, ordered land surveys, and hired civil and environmental consultants costing the district hundreds of thousands of dollars that is seemingly being thrown out the window. In the January 23rd meeting of that year, the architect's drawings were presented to the board. Mr. Fornella's comments following that presentation was, I think we need to get moving. We've been talking about this for a long time. We need to get moving. End quote. If there was a sense of urgency in January, why now with the Board? Seek other options after construction, recommendations have already been made, and we'll keep the campus together and keep other land options open. You didn't need the land then, and you still don't need it now. The proposal is a gross abuse of power and a waste of everyone's time and resources. When you already have enough space to pick up the entire campus, move it across the street and still have some room left over. The only remaining thought could be that the board is going to let the 100 acres sit empty for the foreseeable future. So why, why purchase so much? In the first place, also written in the *Almanac*, from Board Member Teresa Burroughs, quote, that's a lot of money, and it's a lot of money that will impact the community. End quote. Displacing one of the largest standing families in the district is an emotional turmoil, and has caused and has already caused at the start of the holiday season, and should be a moment of reflection, for everyone sitting on the Board today.

Mandy Seder. My maiden name is Potts. My parents live at 299 Sygan Road, and my brother and his family live at 291. I'm here today to plead for you all to vote no to the despicable use of power in the attempt to steal our family property by eminent domain. My father, who is here, and one of his brothers, who is also here. They're in their eighties, and they should not be fighting this fight to keep what has been in our family for four generations. Voting, yes, will cause them, and has caused our entire family extreme emotional and financial distress. When the offer the district made was declined, which is our right. That should have been the end of it. No is supposed to mean no. Using the power entrusted in you and the Board to take our land against our will is unethical, and is not what the school is supposed to stand for. Where, where, where would stop? Because it certainly wouldn't stop at our property. It would probably continue down the road. So again, I just urge everyone sitting here to vote no. Thank you. Everybody have a nice Thanksgiving.

Jillian Potts, 291 Sygan Road. At last week's meeting I stated that I do not believe the Board's proposed approval for a resolution authorizing the condemnation of over half of my family's farm does not reflect well on the school today. I would like to expand upon that. I personally am a 2020 graduate of South Bayette. And I learned what eminent domain was right here in this building four years post graduation. And I'm using the skills I learned in these classrooms to fight for my family and the entire township's right to property. During my research I found a webpage belonging to the Institute for justice. They are a nonprofit public interest law firm, whose mission is to end widespread abuses of government power, and secure the constitutional rights that allow all Americans to pursue their dreams. They say eminent domain is not just abused. When people lose their homes in court, it is also abused when a home or business owner sells under the threat of condemnation. The Government's ability to condemn property is so ominous that the mere threat of eminent domain influences all negotiations. True, voluntary negotiation is impossible when one party has the power to get what it wants, no matter what. If the government can take property, one at once. Owners have no real power in negotiation. So when officials say they will use eminent domain only as a last resort, it simply means they will force. They will use force to take people's property against their will, if they do not agree on price. I would like to remind this Board that this is exactly what is being done to my family. My grandfather and his brothers painstakingly made the decision to sell a portion of our farm as the years had passed and their health declined. When the school came to us with an undervalued estimate, the offer was rejected as noted by the school solicitor in last week's meeting. That was their right. Instead of understanding that no means no, the school has now begun to move unjustly to take our land by eminent domain. You are the example for the citizens of this township as well as the student body who we have a representative of here today. Let's take a look at the South Fayette high school handbook, a document every student has to sign, and at least when I attended, had to take a test on specifically. I'd like to look into the code of ethics. On page 78, defiance is listed as a level 2 offense. Defiance is defined by the school as refusal to obey a direct, reasonable request. No means, no. On page 80, disrespect is listed as a level 3 offense. In my eyes the

board is an offender of both. Are you as a board member, not expected to follow the basic ethics that a 14 year old can? Are you not expected to treat others with the dignity and respect that this community shouts from the rooftops? Are these truly the standards we want to set for our community? Are they not expected to set an example for our students? I'm ashamed by the proposals put forth by the School Board. It is concerning to see the criteria guiding these decisions as they fall short of the values I believe we should uphold. I urge you to see how poorly this reflects on the district. I urge you to vote no.

Dave Boehmer, 265 Sygan Road. My farm is next to Potts' farm. It's so sad to see agricultural loss to development never to be farmland again. It's a tragedy to have a family farm and way of life taken with a stroke of a pen. Did you know that Pennsylvania agriculture contributes more than 132 billion dollars to our State economy annually? It takes farmland to produce this wealth. The Pennsylvania legislature realized this, and that's why, in 1981, they enacted Act 43, the Agricultural security area law. The purpose of this law is to preserve and protect Pennsylvania farmland. The law limits condemnation of agricultural land by eminent domain. Did you know that since 1998 South Fayette landowners have enrolled over 2,200 acres of agricultural land? In this program you should check to see if this property is protected by this law. It's a matter of public record. It's my understanding. The school district has already purchased, with 4.3 million taxpayer dollars, 100 acres of the former diamond property across the road from the campus. The school district should utilize this existing property for its expansion plans and I recommend you vote no.

Danielle Puhatch 1202 Newberry Highland. I'm speaking to you tonight in hopes that I can beg you to vote no to the acquisition of the Potts property via eminent domain. Executing eminent domain should only be used when there are no other reasonable alternatives. This is not the current scenario, and the construction plan presented to the community did not include this. This is a recent change. If the construction needs have changed and alternatives have been honestly assessed and honestly deemed non-viable, the School Board has failed greatly in its communication and transparency to the community. I expected more of the individuals that I voted for. While it's possible that the Potts family may have initiated the conversation, as they thought they might have an asset that could benefit their family and the School Board, that conversation is over. They have said no to selling the property, and it doesn't matter if you feel that your rate is fair. It's time for the Board to move on, as the land is not integral to the construction project, and you can move on without it. To continue the pursuit of land via eminent domain promotes questionable intentions and integrity of the board members. These optics are poor. The community sees a massive and expensive piece of land sitting across the street. It was a hefty purchase that was justified by this Board as needed for expansion. Yet it's not being used. The community sees the support staff being denied an increase in pay that they deserve for supporting our everyday activity with students and teachers. There's no funding for them, but there's money available to purchase unneeded land executing eminent domain to take their property does not add value to the construction design, nor to the education of our students pursuing the property via eminent domain, is irresponsible, and quite frankly an abuse of your local Government authority. I did not knowingly vote for School Board members who had the intention to execute their authority in such a disgraceful manner. Many of you tote your lifelong multi decade, multi-generational Southgate status like a badge when you speak, and when you ran for this seat. Len, Tom, Bill, Esther, this badge is an honor, and you are a unique demographic in the community. But to take the Potts' property is a smack in the face and a stab in the back to the lifelong South Fayetteers who are the roots of this community, and they supported you in your candidacy. Responsible leaders would pursue other options to illustrate your commitment to the good of the community and its members. To vote yes, would be blatant disregard for the trust and the faith that the community has placed in you to do what is ethically right. You must vote no, the property is not needed. It's not yours to take. There are other good options. Use your voice. Vote no.

Terry Rastetter Coon. I'm a large acreage landowner in South Fayette township. My family has owned large acreage in South Fayette Township for over 75 years, and have contributed their time, their funds generously to this community over those same 75 years. Most of my family were educated here in the South Fayette Township School District. I hope that the Board, the Solicitor and the Superintendent had the time and chance to read my emails and therefore know that I am here tonight to protect the school district, the taxpayers and the pots. My mother, Dolores Rastetter, and my brother Randy Rastetter are here as well and are also large acreage landowners in South Fayette township, and they can concur

with what I'm about to say. I have their proxy. I probably am going to go over three minutes so I will be speaking for them as well. I will be asking some questions through my talk, but these are merely rhetorical questions. Quite frankly. I'm really not certain why all of our lives are being disrupted such that we now need to stand here tonight and defend legal standards that the Board must and is required to meet. I am uncertain as to why the Solicitor did not advise you to negotiate this acquisition of the Potts property with reasonableness and fair dealing particularly when the Board paid over \$40,000 an acre over six years ago to the Diamonds. It is inappropriate to disparately treat neighboring landowners. As I mentioned in my email to you, these parcels are similarly situated, and the Board members set the standard, and I know it wasn't the current Board members, but the Board members who approved the last sale set the standard of land in and around the South Fayette Township school campus. Certainly you may and are entitled to file an eminent domain action and waste taxpayers money, and everyone's time in doing so. Most of us know that one can file a lawsuit frivolously anytime they want for no reason at all. However, this is not how a professional Board should conduct themselves. You have not met the legal standards for an eminent domain action, nor have you offered reasonable and just compensation to the Potts. Instead, you stampede to bullying tactics and threaten an eminent domain action. Should you file an eminent domain action, this case could be tried, tied up in the courts for years. Then, of course, there was always the possibility of an appeal by either side which would cost the taxpayers even more money unnecessarily, yet would line the pockets of the Solicitor's law firm. Ultimately, South Fayette Township will lose because the legal standards for a taking have not been met and further South Fayette Township would still have to pay the Potts a reasonable, fair, and equitable just compensation per acre for their land, which could amount to \$60,000 per acre. Is this the way that you want to bully and unfairly treat people in the municipality that pay your bills? So I ask again, why are you even considering this avenue? Why are we even here this evening discussing inappropriate abuse of the court's processes? Apparently you have been convinced that you have the right to do so. However, the school district is not the only party who has rights here. Eminent domain also protects landowners. There are clear legal standards that the Board needs to meet, and these standards have not been met. You will end up paying much more should this case proceed to litigation. Your only reasonable alternative is to vote no. That's the only reasonable alternative with respect to the eminent domain proceedings, and operate in fair dealing with the Potts family, and pay them a reasonable, fair, and equitable per acre, amount for their land, or let it go. Those are your options.

Leslie Willetts and Tom Willetts 568 Hickory Grade Road, emailed: Dear South Fayette School Board Representative, I'm writing in regard to this district's action to start the eminent domain process for 291 Sygan Road owned by the Potts family. This action by the Board is not justified or representative of our community values. I am urging you to vote no.

Old Business

There was no old business discussed.

New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Superintendent's Monthly Report – Dr. Michelle Miller

- The Elementary and Intermediate Schools held the 2024 Science and Invention Fair on November 21.
- The Intermediate School ranked in the top 1% of Pennsylvania schools by *U.S News and World Report*
- Elementary and Intermediate School students have been recognized through the PBIS program for making safe, kind, and responsible choices each week.
- The Middle School Forensics Team competed against nine other schools last Saturday bringing home more than 20 top three awards across six categories.

- Teacher-parent conferences were held in all four schools. Middle School students took part in their own student-led conference where they were able to share their achievements and points of improvement with their teachers and parents.
- The Middle School Girls Basketball Teams completed their seasons undefeated.
- Eighth graders celebrated during the annual Outsiders Day as they dressed like their favorite Greaser or Soc to celebrate what they have learned about the S.E. Hinton novel.
- Seventh grade student Fatima Eriiknova was selected as one of the 10 finalists in a nationwide holiday card competition.
- More than twenty members of the High School Student Government accompanied by Dr. Yerace attended the Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils (PASC) State Leadership Convention November 1-2 at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School. The group brought home the PASC Distinguished Keystone Council award.
- Nine high school seniors publicly committed to continue their academic and athletic careers at their colleges of choice at the signing day event.
- The fifth annual Uncommon Conference on joy, equity, diversity, and inclusion had the highest attendance to date with 29 registered schools and more than 400 participating students.
- Four orchestra students participated this week at the PMEA Honors Orchestra festival.
- The Varsity Competitive Cheerleading Team earned 1st place at the Tornado Warning Competitive Cheerleading Competition on November 10.
- Four students were named as WPIAL Girls All-Stars by the WPIAL Soccer Coaches Association.
- The 17th Annual Stuff-A-Bus Toy Drive is currently underway.

BUSINESS

Iriti seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Ryan Neely for Board approval of Resolution 24-03 for the District to continue participating on the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Joint Purchasing Board for the 2024-2025 school year.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to enter into an agreement with Global Wordsmiths to provide interpretation and translation services, effective February 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026.

And on the recommendation of the the Superintendent and Director of Facilities Steve Timmins for Board approval to enter into a three year agreement for lawn and ground maintenance services with Shamrock Lawn and Fields Services at the estimated cost of \$150,956 per year with the option to extend the agreement by one year at a time subject to negotiated costs.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Director of Finance Ryan Neely, and Director of Technology Rob Warfield for Board approval to enter into a 36 month agreement with DQE Communications to provide a District back-up Internet line at a cost of \$750 per month, pending service implementation.

Voice Vote - All Yes

Gray seconded Welch on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Finance Ryan Neely in accordance with Act 1 of 2006, for Board approval of the Resolution for any property tax increase for the 2025-2026 fiscal year not to exceed the District's base index of 5.2%. A copy of the approved Resolution will be filed with the Pennsylvania Department of Education in accordance with the provision of Act 1 of 2006. By doing so, the Board adopts Resolution 24-02 Not to Exceed the Index.

Roll Call Vote

Yes - Bruce, Burroughs, Cardillo, Fornella, Gray, Iagnemma, Iriti, Pantankar, Welch

Welch seconded Iriti on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Solicitor for Board approval of a resolution authorizing the condemnation in fee simple of approximately 33.207 acres of the 58.9310 acre property owned by Duane F. Potts, Harvene R. Potts, Clifford Potts, and Robert Potts which is more fully identified as 291 Sygan Road, McDonald, Pennsylvania with a tax parcel ID No 327-G-002.

Roll Call Vote

No - Bruce, Burroughs, Cardillo, Fornella, Gray, Iagnemma, Iriti, Pantankar, Welch

PERSONNEL

Iriti seconded Bruce on the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval for Assistant Director of Student Support Services Gretchen Tucci to supervise the programs and services of English Language Learners, Gifted, Enrichment, and Homelessness during the months of January 2025 and February 2025 at a monthly stipend of \$1,000.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Middle School Principal Dr. Erin Crimone for Board approval of the resignation of Middle School Teacher Beth Kress, effective June 5, 2025.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval for Slippery Rock University student Sydney Abbondanza to be a Student Teacher with Intermediate School Teacher Jordan Kavinsky and Middle School Teacher Nicole Canofari from January 21, 2025, through May 8, 2025, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval of Zaina Boulos Kennedy as a High School Long-Term ESL Substitute Teacher, retroactive to November 11, 2024, at the rate of \$160.00 per day.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Food Services Nicolle Pleil for Board approval to hire Opal Mehok as a Food Service Worker, at the probationary rate of \$12.61, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents. After the successful completion of the probationary period, the rate will be \$15.76 per hour.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Food Services Nicolle Pleil for Board approval to hire Liquin Tan as a Substitute Food Service Worker at the rate of \$11.55 per hour, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval of the following EPR for the 2024-2025 school year.

Middle School Camp Coordinator	Robert Ruffolo
Middle School Chorus Personal Care Paraeducator	Meghan Hartman
High School Bocce Personal Care Paraeducator	Christine Magdich
High School Bocce Personal Care Paraeducator	Lee Ann Luck

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Wrestling Coach Rick Chaussard for Board approval of Joshua Miller as a Volunteer Assistant Wrestling Coach for the 2024-2025 season.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Facilities Steve Timmins for Board approval to hire the following Custodians at a probationary rate of \$14.57 per hour, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents. After the successful completion of the probationary period, the rate will be \$18.21 per hour.

- John Steffenauer
- Jeremy Wagaman

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler for Board approval to hire Erin Sankey as a Substitute Paraeducator at the rate of \$12.50 per hour and as a Substitute Personal Care Paraeducator at the rate of \$13.50, effective date to be determined, pending receipt of required documents.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval of the resignation of Elementary School Paraeducator Jean Bonavita, effective November 25, 2024.

Voice Vote - All Yes

EDUCATION

Welch seconded Irit on the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval for Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kristin Deichler and Director of Innovation and Strategic Partnerships Dr. Matt Callison to attend the 2025 ASU+GSV Summit in San Diego, California, from April 6, 2025, through April 9, 2025. The cost of registration will be covered by a scholarship.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Dr. Natasha Dirda for Board approval for High School Teacher Tara Surloff to participate in Classrooms without Borders in Israel from December 2, 2025, through December 9, 2025. There will be no cost to the District.

And on the approval for the Superintendent to attend SuperCourageous at Deloitte University: The Leadership Center from February 21, 2025, through February 23, 2025, in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Miller received a scholarship to attend this leadership opportunity. The cost of travel is included in the 2024-2025 budget.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services Dr. Rachel Andler for Board approval to conduct the Extended School Year (ESY) program in the summer of 2025. The program will run Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., beginning July 7, 2025, through July 24, 2025. The cost of the program will be included in the 2025-2026 budget.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and High School Principal Dr. Natasha Dirda for Board approval for High School Band Director Eryn Carranza, High School Choral Director Christine Elek, and High School Orchestra Director Cloe Hall to travel with the music department (band, choir, and orchestra) to Chicago, Illinois, from April 3, 2025, through April 6, 2025, for the annual music department trip. Student and parent participants are responsible for the cost of the trip. The District is financially responsible for the cost of the administrator and any required nurses and or paraeducators to attend.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Intermediate School Principal Tom Kaminski for Board approval for Intermediate School Orchestra Director Christina Crivelli to attend the American String Teachers Association National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, from March 19, 2025, through March 22, 2025. The cost of the trip is included in the 2024-2025 budget.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Intermediate School Principal Tom Kaminski for Board approval to hold a Summer Strings Camp for Intermediate School students in the summer of 2025. The camp will be held from July 28, 2025, through July 31, 2025. The registration fee of \$40 per child will cover the cost of all staffing and programming.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Intermediate School Principal Tom Kaminski, and Elementary School Principal Tyler Geist for Board approval to hold Summer STEAM Camps for both Intermediate and Elementary Schools students in the summer of 2025. The camps will be held from July 14, 2025, through July 17, 2025. The morning session will run from 9:00 a.m. to noon and will be open to students entering grades 4, 5, and 6. The afternoon session will run from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will be open to students entering grades 2 and 3. The registration fee of \$40 per child will cover the cost of all staffing and programming.

Voice Vote - All Yes

TRANSPORTATION

There were no items discussed.

ATHLETICS

Patankar seconded Iriti on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Athletic Director Mark Keener for Board approval of the Athletic Booster guidelines.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Baseball Coach Ken Morgan for Board approval for the Boys Junior Varsity and Varsity Baseball teams to travel to Tampa, Florida, to play in a baseball tournament from March 13, 2024, through March 17, 2025, tentatively. There will be no cost to the District.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Girls Varsity Softball Coach Olesia Stasko for Board approval for the Girls Varsity Softball team to travel to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, to play in a softball tournament from March 20, 2025, through March 24, 2025, tentatively. There will be no cost to the District.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Indoor Track and Field Coach Scott Litwinovich for Board approval for the Varsity Boys and Girls Indoor Track and Field teams to travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to participate in an indoor track tournament from January 25, 2025, to January 26, 2025. There is no cost to the District.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent, Athletic Director Mark Keener, and Head Varsity Cheerleading Coach Maggie Conosciuto for Board approval for the Varsity Competitive Cheerleaders to travel to Orlando, Florida, to compete in the UCA High School Nationals in Walt Disney World from February 6, 2025, through February 11, 2025, tentatively.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Athletic Director Mark Keener for Board approval for Freshman Adriana Romanelli to participate in Individual Gymnastics in the WPIAL and PIAA under South Fayette's name. Her mother Jody Romanelli would be her coach and there will be no cost to the district. Her parents are responsible for all transportation and documentation. This would be in effect for the 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 school years.

And on the recommendation of the Superintendent and Athletic Director Mark Keener for Board approval for the Girls and Boys Varsity Swimming and Diving teams to travel to the Mohawk Invitational in Morgantown, West Virginia, on December 7, 2024. The District will supply transportation to and from the meet.

Voice Voice - All Yes

CONSTRUCTION

Patankar seconded Iriti to table the consideration of the authorization for Civil & Environmental Consultants (CEC) to perform an initial Geotech investigation for the K-2 and Maintenance/Bus Facility.

Voice Voice - All Yes

MISCELLANEOUS

Second reading of Policy 915: School-Affiliated Organizations/Booster Groups

Burroughs seconded Iriti on the recommendation of the Superintendent for Board approval of Policy 913: Non School Organizations/Groups/Individuals.

Voice Vote - All Yes

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS AND/OR TAXPAYERS

There were no comments.

Solicitor's Report

There was no information reported.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee Report

There was no information to report.

President Tom Iagnemma

B. South Fayette Foundation

Dr. Miller reported that the Santa Letter Fundraiser raised approximately \$2,000.

Jen Iriti

C. PSBA/Legislative Committee Report

There was no information to report.

Prajakta Patankar

D. Parkway West

There was no information to report.

Tom Iagnemma

E. SHASDA

There was no information to report.

Joe Welch

Iriti seconded Welch to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m.